105 throughout the eight tribes. The horde, dealt with in the chapter on
technology, and the phratry may or may not be present in a given
area. The tribe is of minor importance in native life.

The Clan

614 The Murngin clan is an exogamic patrilineal group averaging forty
or fifty individuals who possess a common territory which averages
423 360 square miles.[5] This group possesses one or more sacred totemic
118 water holes, formed by a creator totem, in which the whole of the
tribal life is focussed; all members of the clan are born from this
water hole, and all go back to it at death; in it the totem's spirits live
with the mythological ancestor, the souls of the dead, and the unborn
children. The male members of the clan who can be the permanent
occupants of the group's land possess totemic emblems in common.

614 A clan frequently has an exclusive name for its people and another
[197] preferred one that defines the language spoken by this people as dif-
ferent from that of all other clans. The clan is exogamous by virtue
[582] of belonging to a moiety, which prevents marriage within its half
of the tribe. Theoretically an individual can marry into any one of the
clans in the opposite moiety. The tribal and intertribal myths of the
173 moiety which are saturated with themes expressing the local organiza-
614 tion of these people always devote small parts of their stories to the
special circumstances of the creation of a clan. They also give its asso-
ciation with the totems and other elements of tribal life considered
important by these people. The more localized myths which concern
only two or three clans usually symbolize intra-clan solidarity and
inter-clan antagonism. The ceremonies possessed by a clan, like the
[184] totems, are ordinarily owned by other similar groups belonging to
the same moiety, although local variations in totem and ceremony
occur.

614 The following relatives are always found in a clan: marikmo[6]
(father's father and father's father's sister), bapa (father), mokul bapa
(father's sister), wawa (older brother), yukiyuko (younger brother),
yeppa (sister), gatu (son and daughter), and maraitcha (son's son and
son's daughter). In other words, these relatives are in ego's brother's

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[5] For additional elements in the clan configuration see Part III.

[6] See Chart II, page 59, for the place of kinship terms in the kinship system. Native terms have been used more frequently than the author would have liked, but it was impossible always to give an exact translation in a few words. It seems better to define a word carefully at least once, and thereafter use the term. (See Glossary of Native Terms.)

and as an integral part of the culture. Murngin myth dies hard, and 423
ownership of land is in Murngin myth even after the final destruction 614
of a particular clan. It would never occur to a victorious group to 773
annex another's territory, even though the entire male population were 727
destroyed and the dead men's women and children taken by the victors. In the passage of time the clan using it would absorb it into their own territory and the myth would unconsciously change to express this. In the thought of the Murngin, land and water, people and clan are an act of the creator totem and the mythological ancestors, who always announce in myth and ceremony that this is the country of such and such a clan; to expropriate this land as a conscious act would be impossible. Just as the totem, the creator, and the members are a permanent and inextricable part of the culture, so is the clan's ownership of the land. This will become clearer when the concepts of birth, death, and totem are associated, and the sacred wells of the clans considered.

The forty or fifty-odd people who belong to a clan do not all live 614
in the land of the clan. All sisters and daughters, since the rule of marriage is patrilocal after the first year or two, go to their husband's clan 591
to live and rear their families. This means that fully half of the members of the clan live after the age of puberty with a group belonging to the opposite moiety. On the other hand, the wives of the clansmen have come from clans of the opposite moiety and make up the difference in population caused by the loss of the group's own females.

Friendly clans always live together during the seasons when food is 614
plentiful in certain area. When the turtles of Buckingham Bay are 423
laying hundreds of eggs nightly along the Djirin coast, the Birkili
and Wangurri may be found there. When the cycad palm nuts are 221
ready for picking on Millingimbi Island, the surrounding clans gather for the period of plenty. This is done as a right, no invitation being necessary and no one questioning this right as long as peace reigns. Let there be trouble and cause for a possible killing, and the visitors return to their own land, even though their visit has taken on the nature of a permanent residence.

The most important unifying concept in the whole of clan ideology 778
is that of the sacred water hole in which reposes the spiritual unity of 614
clan life. It is the fundamental symbol of clan solidarity. From it come all the eternal qualities, and to it those qualities return when they have been lived or used by members of the clan. Water, in Murngin thought, is one of the most important symbols of spiritual life.

132 In the rainy season great torrents of tropical rain fall daily, making
312 large portions of the mainland south of the Arafura Sea, for weeks
and sometimes months at a time, a series of islands in a shallow sea
of mud and water. Then, with rare interruptions, there is continuous
[137] drought for six or seven months. During the wet season tropical vege-
tation has sprung up everywhere; giant spear grass sometimes grows
to twelve and fourteen feet in height, covering all the country and paths,
making communication a difficult matter at best, and in many places
impossible. The water recedes, the water holes become drier and drier,
and a large number disappear entirely; birds and fish are gone, and the
many varieties of lilies and yams disappear. It is then that the native
appreciates the value of water, just as before he realized the harm it
could do him. It is doubtful if anyone ever died of thirst in this coun-
try, but it is certain that many have felt its pangs. Deaths have oc-
curred from the great floods. It is small wonder that with the food
[823] and drink of life dependent on the water holes, and possible death
resulting from the great floods, the native has made water his chief
symbol of the clan's spiritual life.

312 The water hole may be an ordinary small lake or billibong, a river
or creek flooding through the domain of the clan, a spring of water,
778 or a native well or water hole; and in a few cases it may be the ocean
itself, but this last form is usually associated with a tidal spring.[9] All
the water holes found in the territory of a clan are divided into two
classes: they are either garma wells or narra (ranga) wells. The first
are totemic but not sacred; they were made by the lower order of
totems, whose emblems may be displayed in camp and seen by the
women. The narra wells are always sacred; they were made by the
higher wongar totems, whose emblems are ranga (higher emblems)
and can be seen only by the initiated young men after the age of
puberty. A clan always has at least one and sometimes three or four of
the latter.

778 The narra water hole is usually not taboo to women. They may
[562] obtain water there, bathe in the pool, and possibly fish or gather
yams and lily bulbs. Occasionally a well becomes so taboo that no
woman is allowed near it. Such is the great well, Mir-rir-min-a, of the

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[192] [9] The following native terms are used: a water hole or well, mang-o-tji (literally, eye); a spring, mil-min-jerk; river, man-i (literally, throat); creek, par-ka; a small rill running from a spring or artesian well, ri-el-la; billibong, lum-mi (upper thigh); rock-basin water, gar-ra (rain) nar-ku-la (water); fresh-water bog, mar-a-ka; saline but drinkable bog water, gal-la-min-djir; the ocean, or salt spring, or any salt water which is undrinkable, ka-pu mon-ok (water salt).

Liaalaomir clan on the Glyde River. Here was enacted the great drama 778 of the Rock Python swallowing the two Creator Sisters which has tremendous import in ceremonial and mythological activity.[10] Even the men will not stay on or near this spot at night. The Gunabibi ceremony, although an enactment of this great event, is not conducted here for fear of disturbing the peace of the great father snake, thus causing him once again to come out of his subterranean depths and swallow those who have angered him.

All clan totems are thought to lie below the clan water hole in the subterranean waters. Here too will be found the old mythological ancestors who lived in the time of the activities of the totems on earth [776] in the great mythological days when the world was made and named. When a ranga (higher totemic emblem) has been made by the men of the clan for a ceremony and has been used during the night time, it is put back into the mud of the water hole so that the wongar (spirit of the totem) which is felt to be in the emblem may return to the well.

When a child is born it comes from this well as a spirit. In the well 778 it has the appearance of a very small fish. The spirit comes to the father 842 who is to be, and asks for its mother so that it may be born. The father 787 points out the mother and the spirit child enters her vagina. This happens while the father is dreaming; or when he is out hunting he may notice something peculiar about the actions of an animal or bird which will lead him to the conclusion that his wife is going to have a child.

My informant arrived one morning obviously anxious to talk: 787

> I had a nice dream the other night. I dreamed that a boy child walked 842 past all the other humpies [Australian white term for native huts] in the 825 camp and kept coming until he got to my house. He beat on the bark wall. He called out, "Father! Father! Where are you?"
>
> "Here I am."
>
> "Where is mother?"
>
> I told him and wakened up. I thought to myself, "True." Yesterday I went fishing with my wife at the creek. I went up one side of the creek and she went up the other. By and by a bream fish came up and took her hook. He came up to it easily and quietly. My wife did not have to pull on the line, for he came in to her like he wanted to. My mielk [woman] was standing in the water only up to her ankles. He came up to her even though she was in the shallow water. Then he stopped quickly, shook

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[10] See Chapter IX for a detailed description of the myth and ceremonies centered around this totemic well.

That is nothing. That man is far down below in the deep water with 775
his ranga, with his wongar and his old marikmo."

The soul of the dead (bir-im-bir) then returns to its totem and the totem lives in the sacred narra well. This is true for both men and women.

A Warumeri clansman was unconscious and near death. The relatives 763
sang the garma sea-way (a cycle of songs about the sea and those 533
totems which are connected with it). While they sang, it was thought, the spirit of marikmo was listening to the song. They then sang crayfish, which is a Warumeri totem. The hand of the dying one moved convulsively like a crayfish. They sang whale, also the clan's totem, and the person dying kicked in imitation of a whale. This meant he was going to die, and he was telling his people. He wanted them to sing his song, it was believed, so that his marikmo and old gatu (father's father's father) would know and come to him.

The dying one stiffened and was quiet. He was dead according to 763
tribal thought, although his heart beat. "I see that go," one relative said about the heart of the dying man, "and I knew he was dead, but that his marikmo was looking out for him. I could see that because that old man marikmo moved inside his heart. He was taking that spirit back to the Warumeri well."

After death and before the burial ceremony, the symbol of the narra 764
well of the deceased is painted on his chest and abdomen—in this instance, the wild duck well. This is done in order that all the dead of the well can see the one who has just died and take him immediately away to his water hole.

When, during the Djungguan ceremony for the great snake, Yur- 776
lunggur, and during the Narra ceremony for the other totemic em- 778
blems, a ranga is made, not only does the totem or the totem's essence enter into it through the singing of the men, but also the birimbir spirits of the dead ancestors—illustrating the close association of the clan members with their totems and dead ancestors.

The mythological ancestors who are in the well and who had some part in its formation are called old marikmo or old gatu. Their names express clearly the affiliation of the mythical men to the narra well and to the totem.

The names of the wells, as will be seen by examining the list of 778
those belonging to the clans, pages 39-51, show the same totemic affilia- 103
tion either directly or indirectly. Like the names of the mythological ancestors, they are of two types, the sacred and the camp variety.

778 The sacred ones are used only during the great ceremonies, usually the
103 Narra for the great majority of totems. It is then that all the wells of a
moiety and the names of its dead ancestors are called out by the leader.
[562] The camp name is the one known by both men and women. No woman
knows the sacred name of a well, or, for that matter, anything else that
has to do with the sacred tribal life.

103 The list on page 46 shows that the chief totem of the Liaalaomir
778 clan is a carpet snake. The names of the well are carpet snake's nose
614 and menstruation blood, the latter referring indirectly to the actions of
the snake.

The Djirin clan has the shark for a totem (see list, page 45), and the following names for its well: shark's head, ripples from a shark's swimming, hill from a tidal wave made by the shark when he created this country.

Although the well names refer to a totem which belongs to the other clans in the moiety, they also refer in particular to geographical aspects of one clan's territory, so that they have local significance. The same is true of the names of the mythological ancestors.

553 A man's name is taken from his male mari (mother's mother's brother) and his male marikmo (father's father). All sacred names are his marikmo's and not his mari's, but a man's camp names come chiefly from his mari; these latter also usually reflect totemic affiliation.

[778 The symbol of the well is also painted on a man after his initiation
302] and when he receives his totemic name in the Narra corroboree, and
on a small boy when he is to be circumcised.

601 In addition to the relatives listed on page 16 as always included in
the clan, there may be included within the clan: mari, male and female
614 (mother's mother and mother's mother's brother); mokul rumeru
(mother's mother's brother's daughter); marelker (mother's mother's
brother's son); kutara, male and female (sister's daughter's son and
sister's daughter's daughter); gurrong, male and female (father's sister's daughter's son and father's sister's daughter's daughter).

601 These relatives, too, may be blood or tribal in their relationship to
ego. Men, for example, may be called brothers by ego and be clan
611 members only remotely related to ego. The usual Murngin method
of reckoning kin does not always operate within the clan, for, when
there have been wrong marriages,[12] the practice of tracing descent
through the mother and ignoring the father does not function. This

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[12] See pages 105-106.

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consummation of his family of procreation through his first child's 761
"birth" effects the father's spiritual birth into a recognized higher 787
status in the community age grouping, and simultaneously the new 851
being is taken into the lowest age grade.

As an old man, the Murngin learns the final mysteries of life by 561
seeing the most esoteric of the totems. Ultimately he dies and assumes
a new social status, and by the mourning rite of passage enters his last 761
social grouping, for he still retains a social personality of his own as 775
long as he is in the memory of his group. His ultimate fate is loss of 778
social personality when he is forgotten as an individual and remembered only as an undifferentiated part of a long line of clan ancestors and is absorbed in the general sacredness of the clan well. The sacred power of the clan well derives in part from the knowledge of the souls of the long and the recent dead dwelling within it. The dead soul, when it is ceremonially ushered into the totemic well, is a spiritual part of the man's or woman's participation in the land of the living.
The woman's spiritual existence, although not primary and direct as 562
thought of by the Murngin, is nevertheless real and identifiable, for she 761
has a number of sacred totemic names known to her father and brothers, 778
she comes from the totemic water hole as a fish, and vicariously, and to some extent directly, participates in all the sacred totemic rituals. Her partial participation in these rituals which are enacted outside the men's ground also gives her a certain amount of ritualization.

As a man becomes more deeply integrated into his daily community 561
life, that is, when he becomes old enough to go on expeditions as a responsible member of the blood feud and to be held accountable by the enemies of the clan as a part of his group, and when he marries and has children and extends his kinship personality by primary contacts, he at the same time grows deeper and deeper into his esoteric existence and becomes more deeply learned in the rituals and the sacred language.

A review of the chapter on economics and technology quickly con- 462
vinces one that men make and use the greater number of the more
complex tools, weapons, and implements. If all the complexities of the 562
technological apparatus as a part of the society's adaptation to its 561
natural environment were charted, each process receiving a line symbolizing its part in the general technical behavior, it would become apparent that the greater the complexity of the technology, the greater the participation of the men in it, and the simpler the technological processes, the more women participate. There is a possible correlation

283 of the red-breasted parrot can be used for certain totemic emblems.
237 To collect a sufficient supply of red feathers to put on such totems as
431 their fire, woman and other Dua moiety totemic emblems demands
considerable industry not only on the part of the totem makers in their
daily hunting and robbings of birds' nests but also in gift exchanges.
This means that red ocher and other body paints, spear heads from
the interior, carved wooden spears from the coastal belt, and other
objects of economic value must be had to trade. Small white feathers
from hawks' breasts and from the sulphur-crested cockatoo and the
blue-eyed corella are also used for the string of many totems. The
larger feathers of the cockatoos and the yellow crest of the sulphur-crested
cockatoo are used for the great ritual headdresses made by the
[314] men with the aid of adhesive gathered from the ironwood tree and the
honeybee's hive. Ironwood resin makes a very hard, durable cement
and is used for many purposes for which the beeswax is too malleable.
[237] Ordinarily the beeswax is preferred for the molding of head pieces
because the proper shapes can be more easily obtained.

431 Obviously the extension of the kinship personality of a man by the
exchange of gifts between far-off relatives or the strengthening of the
602 bonds between near kin such as mari and kutara definitely stimulates
economic enterprise. More labor is necessary than if these mechanisms
were not present. The goods themselves take on higher value from
[178] their use in the totemic ceremonies; the totemic strings absorb some
of the clan ceremonial power and, once used, are taboo to the uninitiated.
They are of course valuable in another ritual since they will
be used by the receiver for his own totemic emblem and then be passed
on to other reciprocating relatives.

4. *Property*

423 Relating Murngin technological articles to human beings by the concept
of ownership is one of the methods of controlling and regulating
this society's adaptation to the natural environment, since it incorporates
the various articles of technology into the general social order.
The Murngin concepts of property are developed into a variety of
forms according to the type of thing owned. Land is divided among
[614] the clans; and definite areas and their natural objects such as trees,
water holes, and the like are considered as belonging to these exogamic
423 units. Derivatively the moieties are also supposed to have an "owning"
relationship to the land areas of the country. This means that not only
616 are spatial divisions organized by the separation of all things on the

If armed conflict breaks out in a camp where a ceremony is being 628
celebrated, the ritual is usually stopped, either because the partici- 796
pants are afraid to stay, for they may be killed in their sleep, or
because the leaders of the ceremony become angry at what they consider 778
an insult to their totems.

It is believed that while a totemic emblem is in camp all fighting 778
should cease, and any infraction of the tribal law is considered a direct
insult to the totemic emblem and therefore to the clan. The leader of 626
a Narra ceremony, at which the totemic emblems are used, almost 578
always stops the ritual if there has been any serious infraction of
tribal law, because he does not want to accept the consequences of an
affront to his totem. It is believed that the totem itself would seek
vengeance upon any leader who did not protect its interests at such
a time. The writer saw two Narra, a Djungguan, and two Gunabibi
ceremonies terminated because of the outbreak of fighting. The two
Narra were stopped by the leaders because they said their totems were
insulted, the Djungguan and Gunabibi because of the fighters' fear
of death and also because of the anger of the leader of the ceremony.
Another Narra ceremony was not stopped when a fight followed the [684
catching of two women in adultery by their husbands. The women
were thoroughly beaten—less because of the offense itself than because 688]
it took place while a great ceremony was being held—and might have
been killed but for their escape in the black of night by swimming to
a nearby island.

The deliberate stopping of a ceremony demonstrates that warfare 628
and ceremony have clearly antithetical traits. The great ceremonies 796
tend to enlarge the group solidarity both in numbers and in extent
of territory and to create a smoothly functioning unit out of a large 182
number of clans, but warfare destroys this unity and reduces the limits
of solidarity to the clan.

Since both traits are necessary to the tribe's social organization, a nice periodical balance has been struck; at one period ceremonialism controls the people's activities, and later war is uppermost in the relations of the local groups.

EFFECTS OF WARFARE ON POPULATION

A fairly accurate estimate places the population of this area around 162
three thousand. The genealogical material gathered by the writer shows
about an equal number of women and men, with possibly slightly
more men than women. This means that there are about fifteen hun-

765 of the man's personal basket. A piece of a spear that has been broken
628 off and left in the body of the victim is also used as a relic. When a
man has been wounded he sometimes soaks pieces of paper bark in
his blood and presents them to his relatives to be used as reminders
of their duty to compensate him for his injury by helping him kill
or wound a member of the offending man's clan. When a man obtains
one of the relics, it is an almost absolute demand on him to kill a
member of the slayer's group. This is particularly true if it is given to
a young man. The older men usually give their relics to the younger
males.

765 The spirit of the dead is supposed to go with the relic, and the relic
778 has magic power. It can be thrown into an intended victim's fire and
cause him to go to sleep, or the possessor can blow his breath against
789 it and produce the same effect. It is often carried in the mouth during
a battle to make an opponent tired and heavy-footed and to prevent
him from dodging spears. Relics play a prominent part in all feuds.

682 Occasionally men are killed within the clan, but this is not a cause
for war or retaliation by members of the clan or by near relatives from
without the clan. A man may be such a notorious killer and cause so
much trouble for his own clansmen that the entire group will kill
him to stop further disturbances. At times men are slain by their own
688 clan for breaking ceremonial taboos, such as divulging secrets of the
old men to the women or the uninitiated, and for viewing ceremonial
objects before their initiation.

672 If a fight is on and a near relative is accidentally hit by a club or
spear, the person responsible hits himself on the head while saying he
576 is sorry. Here, too, the underlying idea is to inflict an injury on the
responsible person similar to the one the injured party suffered.

152 Military honor also contributes its share to the causes for war. A man
will brave the spears of a whole clan to demonstrate his fearlessness.
517 The writer has seen two brothers defy fifteen men in a spear fight.
The Murngin people are a brave and courageous group. Fear of death
[626] while in a fight is seldom seen. A man who shows an unwillingness
to fight is called a woman and held in extreme contempt.

628 The fundamental principle underlying all the causes of Murngin
warfare is that of reciprocity: if a harm has been done to an individual
681 or a group, it is felt by the injured people that they must repay the
181 ones who have harmed them by an injury that at least equals the one
they have suffered. When the total cultural situation of Murngin life is
181 further examined, this negative reciprocation is found to fit into a

628 Darlwongo country and found the Marderpa man who, many years ago, had cut Danginbir's head off (see page 178).

628 688 Two Darlwongo men approached Natjimbui and told him that this Marderpa man chased them with spears while they were preparing to make their honeybee totem. This is a great crime among the Murngin and a deliberate insult to the totem of the clan. Because of this they were forced to take the string from off the emblem and put it back in their baskets, since the emblem would have lost its efficacy had they continued making it after this occurrence.

Natjimbui the next morning went to look for food. He was followed again by the two Darlwongo old men. When they had penetrated into a nearby jungle for some distance they came upon Natjimbui digging yams. Once more they said to him, "That Marderpa man chased us with spears while we were making our totem. Don't you feel sorry for your [778 611] mother?" (Their totemic emblem was called mother by Natjimbui because his mother was the nearest relative through whom he could trace his relationship to it.)

628 "Yes, I will do it. I do not forget my mother. I will do it tonight."

When night came the married men of the camp gave food to the single men. Everyone sat down at dusk and sang and talked. The Marderpa man was suspicious and did not trust the Darlwongo clansmen. He said out loud, for all the camp to hear, "I am all the same as a kangaroo. I sit up all night and watch."

Natjimbui sat down in the main camp. He did not sleep; he too watched. Hours went by. He grew tired of waiting and reached in his basket and took out the bone of the dead man. He unwrapped the paper bark from the relic and cut the bone in half. He wrapped one half and placed it once more in his basket. He held the other in his hand. He was far enough away from the Marderpa and other members of the camp so that no one could see what he was doing.

628 789 Natjimbui arose and walked over and sat down at the fire beside the Marderpa man. He started talking to him. While they talked he threw small stones into the fire, then he pretended to pick up a stone to throw, but instead of the stone he threw the bone into the fire. He was sure then that the Marderpa would soon be sleeping, since this was done to make the spirit come out of the bone and act upon the Marderpa in such a way that he would be easy to kill. By and by the Marderpa boy said, "I am very sleepy. I think I will go to sleep." They both lay down. Natjimbui continued talking. He asked questions, after some little time, to see if anyone would answer him. No one did. They were all asleep. He stealthily rubbed his spear with the other part of the relic to make it go straight and kill quickly, for he knew that the spirit would guide his spear. He hooked up his spear and pointed at the Marderpa, but too many 628 small boys were sleeping around the man. He took his leg and pushed

we circumcised those young men. That blood made her sick." One 753
old man spoke up and said, "That blood made her sick. It makes 826
women ill when they touch us after the Djungguan. It is the spirit in
that blood that does this. It is the totem, not the wooden emblem, but 784
the spirit inside with the power name. He is in that blood. A woman
cannot touch it or it will make her sick."

Smaller rituals are performed by two or three individuals to cure 755
someone who is ailing. Frequently women rub red ocher over their bodies because of an ailment, this being but an abbreviation of its use in the larger ceremonies. Red ocher string is tied around the head or body to cure a headache or abdominal pain. This act, too, is but a shortening of the ritual in which decorated string is placed around the head or body in the larger ceremonies.

Larger rituals are definitely used to remove pain. Certain parts of 785
the Djungguan are designed to take away the pain from the boy who
is being circumcised. The women relatives whip themselves in order to 826
transfer the pain from the boy to themselves. The head of the boy's 831
penis, they also say, is a turtle's head, so the cutting of the foreskin cannot hurt him since it is not his flesh being cut but that of the animal. These statements are also supposed to remove the pain from the boy.

Other rituals, which assure success in war, are demonstrably only 778
elaborated magical practices. The gaingar spears represent the head of
the Dua and Yiritja moieties. The souls of the dead of the moieties are 789
supposed to be in each weapon. The ceremonial throwing of the spears 775
to assure the killing of an enemy and to prevent the killing of their own men is definitely of a magical nature, the power of these ceremonies depending upon the souls' clustering around the spear just as the power of the magical killing stick depends upon the souls which cluster about its point.

The bone magic ceremony used in the maringo fighting (see Chapter VI, Warfare) is also an elaborate ceremony focused upon the magical idea of the soul's being associated with a bone relic. In earlier parts of this chapter the individual treats the bone in a ceremonial way to practice his magic against his enemies. Both the gaingar and the maringo ceremony from one point of view are elaborate magical practices participated in by the group and led by the ceremonial or war leader.

All the rituals, particularly the Narra, which celebrates the as- 751
cendancy of the clan totem, are commonly used to purify the group of 783

751 183 any uncleanliness which might cause sickness and death. The group baptism in the Narra ceremonies is explicitly considered by the Murngin to be a method of preventing illness and a way of washing away the ritual uncleanliness which causes it. Participation in the Gunabibi has the exact opposite effect to non-participation, since it too prevents sickness and death of the individuals who are a part of it. The whole [165] mourning ceremony is consciously an effort to prevent sickness from occurring to any of the members of the group by forcing the contagious soul away from the land of the living and into the land of the dead.

The Nature of Murngin Dal (Mana or Power)

118 Murngin mana which lies in the rituals is both helpful and harmful. Those things which are powerful and strong because of an extramundane quality are said to be *dal*, which means they have mana and possess spiritual power.

Objects Which Are Dal Because of Primary Relationship with the Totem.—A catalogue of the elements in Murngin society which are dal indicates that all the objects within their material culture can be dal provided they have been given a power name by someone who has [887] the right to give it. Old men are the only ones who know and can use these sacred names. Most of the objects in the material culture which possess the dal quality have it only because of the power name. Dal names fit into the general classification of "inside," while ordinary words in daily use are "outside." The men's sacred camp, the place where all the sacred totemic rituals are held, is described as "inside," the common camp as "outside." The water in the clan well is considered common, ordinary, and outside, whereas the subterranean water down below, where the totems and the ancient ancestors live, is inside. All the very sacred rituals are inside, while the ordinary garma type is outside. The totem, totemic emblems, totemic ancestors and ceremonial objects are all dal. All the objects, then, which have the quality of dal may or may not be sacred in their own right, but in all cases they obtain their power because of a special connection with the inside or sacred.

Objects Which Are Dal Because Connected with the Dead.—Another category of objects is also classed as dal, but the items in this group are not necessarily associated with a totem in a primary relationship. These objects include the bones of a man killed directly by black magic or by an enemy clansman, pieces of a spear found in a wound of a dead clansman, bark or wood saturated in his death's

blood, the heart's blood of a man or woman killed by magic, a hair 778
belt from the head of a dead man, a gondjurma or killing stick used
to puncture the heart of a sorcerer's victim, the body of a dead man,
a burial platform where a body formerly lay but which has since been
removed, the warro or soul which goes to the totemic well, and the
mokoi or trickster soul. All of these items have a common element,
namely, they are associated with the dead. Each one is directly and
primarily related to some aspect of death. The dead, too, are looked
upon as "inside," particularly because very shortly after death the
sacred totemic emblem is placed upon the body of the dead. Women
can no longer look at the corpse, which is immediately wrapped with [764]
paper bark and completely covered, exactly like a totemic object. The
paper bark is now "outside" and something that the women can look
at, while the dead, with the sacred emblem upon it, is now "inside"
and dal. The dead belong to the world of the sacred (see mourning
rites), and these objects, by their primary association with the dead,
partake of this power.

Dal Magicians' Paraphernalia, and Relics.—A third category of dal objects—the paraphernalia of the magician and relics used by the ordinary man to give him extra-mundane aid in his hunting or fishing—are actually only a subdivision of the preceding category, since the power of magicians and the power of relics find their source in the sacredness of the dead.

The heart's blood of a man whose soul has been stolen by a magician 778
is saved, and it often turns up in the hands of a magician or an
ordinary layman in the form of a kind of resin, which is supposed to 789
be the hardened blood. This can be used in fighting to give a little
extra power, and in hunting or fishing it is used the same way as the
shavings of a killing stick, to be described presently. Sometimes the
heart's blood is placed inside the white magician's spirit bag to give it
extra power. This blood gains extra mana by passing through the [438]
possession of a number of people and usually is traded in from more
remote regions in the south.

When the body of a man killed by magic or in a spear fight is dis- 778
interred and the flesh removed from the bones, the finger bones are
often distributed as relics among the clansmen and near relatives. These 775
relics are wrapped in string and placed carefully in the possessor's 765
dilly bag as reminders of the crime they feel has been committed.
This is also true of pieces of the spear which remain in the body, and
of pieces of bark or wood which the dying man may soak in his blood

778 and present to his relatives as reminders. The power which these relics possess is due to the soul of the dead following the bones. The soul is 776 a true or totem-well warro. It listens from the totem well and comes 765 when it is needed for an avenging expedition or to help its possessor in time of trouble. Any account of a clan feud is always filled with the [789] use of these relics. Usually, when a maringo expedition is starting, a magical ceremony is gone through by the avenging group in which the bone of the dead plays the central rôle and decidedly helps to a successful conclusion. The gondjurma or killing stick used by the black magician to puncture the heart of his victim has great power, first, because it is associated with the dead body, second, because it is believed that the souls of the victims cluster about the point, and third, [438] because it gains power by passing through the hands of a great number of men as it is traded from clan to clan and from tribe to tribe. The soul which adheres to this magic is also the Wongar one. It is like a friend to its possessor and he is its master. All of these souls are in or [787] on the stick and can be called for help in hunting or fishing. They will also come to a man when he dreams. They will help foretell the future for him. If he is to be ill, he will feel something pricking him like the end of the stick. If good things are going to happen, one of the souls will come and tell him. If a stick is supposed to have killed a large number of men, all of the souls are supposed to be with it, but actually they are looked upon as one, and it is not so much an individual soul as a kind of diffused power or mana. A killing stick can be in the possession of a magician, or he can give it to an ordinary man who is one of his friends. Such a stick is always kept wrapped in paper bark and covered just as though it were a totemic emblem or ceremonial object and must not be subjected to the profane sight of women or the uninitiated.

When a man wishes to obtain its power to help him in hunting he 778 scrapes off pieces, chews them and swallows them the night before 775 the hunt. Immediately afterwards he shuts his eyes, says nothing, and 224 goes to bed. Next morning he utters not a sound and goes out with 226 his spears looking for game or for fish. "Those souls which the stick killed before this have gone into the water or out into the bush and they have stopped the fish and game so that they can be found. When the man arrives he sees a few. He spits in the water (he is fishing) and a lot of fish come there. He spears one fish and when he spears the 778 one all the rest go dead as if you had poison in the water."

775 If he were hunting kangaroo it would be impossible for him to miss,
224

but he could kill only one, even though there were a herd of kangaroo 778
there. The taboo of silence is placed on the man from the time he eats 775
the gondjurma shavings until he is successful in the hunt "because it 224
means you have the soul inside you and when you spit it goes out
into the water. You can't talk or it would send him out before."

"One time," said an informant who had in his possession a killing 778
stick he intended using, "I was down at the creek trying to catch fish. 775
When I got there I saw Bang-gi-la. He had one of these sticks with
him. He was ready to try it when I got there. He had not used fish 226
poison. I looked at the end of the stick. It had been scraped. While I
stood there the fish came to the top and were dead. I am going to try
mine."

The dry heart's blood can be used in the same way and the magical process is exactly the same. "Wet blood is no good because it makes you sick. When you take wet blood you must keep it until it gets dry."

The stick insect, a creature which looks much like a praying mantis 778
and is one of the minor totems among the western clans of the Dua 775
moiety, is associated with the killing stick primarily because it has a
stick-like shape. It is believed that dead souls are about it, and at 825
times it is called wan-djuk by the western peoples, which means black
magician. Its correct name is war-a-la war-a-la. It is believed that the
warala warala sometimes helps sneak up on people and kill them.
There is an ambivalent attitude taken toward this creature. The natives
play with him when they see him hanging sluggishly to a limb, laugh
at him, treat him rather roughly, yet in their more serious moments
they speak of his association with black magic.

The power of the black magician and his technique and the power 761
of relics used to harm one's enemies (a variety of black magic) find 775
their source in the sacredness of the dead. It is the mana of the dead
which gives this power to magic and which *is* this power. To the liv- 778
ing, the greatest and most intense dysphoria which finds expression 765
in the life of man is death. The more dead souls that cluster about the
evil point of the killing stick, the more power the killing stick pos-
sesses; a punitive war expedition assures itself of success by the magic
clustered in the power of the bone relic because the soul is with it.
The ordinary living animal or fish is killed immediately by the magi-
cal power of the killing stick because the soul of the dead is associated
with it. The dal of the magician is the dal of the dead. The relics
express this same power because they are associated with the dead.
A relic cannot kill, but it can remove many of the traits of the living

761 and make a living man more like the dead. A man goes to sleep be-
775 cause a bone has been put in the fire by him and he is killed by his enemies (see the account of a clan feud in the war chapter). A man
778 cannot run when chased by his enemies because one of them is blowing
765 on a dead man's bone in his mouth, or an evil soul enters a man's head and makes him crazy, the power of the soul coming from that of the dead.

778 The two classes, that of the totem and of the dead, are but two vari-
775 eties of one general type, for both of them belong to the world of the sacred. Their power is contagious and dangerous unless properly handled by ritual. The totem can cause sickness and death just as the power of the dead can produce these same effects.

The Behavior of the Individual and the Society When Magic Is Put into Effect

754 The isolation of the various elements in the particular social configuration surrounding the death of a victim of black magic may help illuminate the fundamental nature of Murngin magic and explain its potency and unusual effectiveness; and a general analysis of the group behavior under such a situation will be profitable.

When the supposed theft of a man's soul becomes general knowl-
754 edge, the sustaining social fabric pulls away from the victim. The
763 familiar attitudes of the kinship personalities change, the collabora-
756 tion of the victim and his society, of which his social personality has always been an integral part, ceases. The group now acts with all the ramifications of its organization and with countless stimuli positively to suggest death to a suggestible individual. The ordinary daily activity of the victim's social life is removed. The society itself creates a situation which, if unchanged, makes it impossible for the individual to adjust himself to it even though he tried; and in addition he usually not only makes no effort to live and to remain part of his group but actually, through the multiple suggestions from it, cooperates in his withdrawal therefrom. He becomes what his society's attitudes make him, committing a kind of *suicide*. The social configuration in which he finds himself operating at this time is one of anomia[2] for him. His ordi-

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[2] Emile Durkheim, *Le Suicide*, Librairie Felix Alcan, Paris, nouvel edition, 1930. In general, anomic suicide is a type supposed to be due to the change in the society which surrounds the individual and gives him a feeling of maladjustment and of being "lost." The change here, however, is more dynamic than one of process; that is, the society as a functioning structure regularly performs this act upon individuals whose souls have been stolen, rather than that the society changes in a structural way and becomes something different from what it was before and by so doing causes the indi-

852 533 (3) Bamboo spear with stone head (Gun-na-mar-mar)
(4) Women and boys (Mielk koon-di Djer-ku-li)
(5) Fat of the kangaroo mixed with red ocher to paint the boy's face (Ri-djil-gur-o)
(6) The taboo name for the warngaitja (Ngur-mir-go-nor-mi-a)

During the singing and dancing the warngaitja is carried in the center of the group of men.

[535] The women meet them and, while the men stand in a compact circle, they dance around them waving branches. The pole is taken to various parts of the camp and the men form circles around it and sing the above cycle of songs while the women dance around them. Finally a permanent place in the center of the main camp is selected, and after singing once more over the warngaitja, it is placed upright on the ground and left there until the end of the Djungguan ceremony.

852 361 When a Djungguan is being celebrated a Murngin camp is divided into several geographical divisions. These territorial divisions are based on the age-grade groupings which are discussed in Chapter IV. The geographical divisions are (1) the general camp, (2) the men's ground, (3) the old men's camp and totem house, (4) the "totem well," or temporary dwelling place of the totemic emblem for one portion of the ceremony, and (5) the snake dance ground.

The territorial division clearly objectifies the grading in the men's association and the differentiation from women: the old men's camp, the holy of holies for the few; the dance ground for the circumcised, which includes the greater part of the young men; and the main camp for the uncircumcised and the women.

778 The men's ground is called Djungguan Wonga (camp). It is also called Ma-rai-in Wonga. Maraiin is a general word meaning, as nearly as it can be translated, powerful, sacred, taboo, or spiritual. It is used to describe anything that is taboo to the women and uninitiated boys. It is not necessarily taboo to everyone in the tribe. Totemic emblems, ceremonial grounds which certain age grades are forbidden, "sacred" names known only to the older men, and certain designs are among the things that are considered maraiin by the Murngin.

A quality possessed by a thing that is maraiin is dal. The literal translation of dal is "hard" and "strong," but dal means strength only in the magical sense of ritually "powerful." The maraiin wonga has a considerable amount of dal, but the old men's camp possesses a concentrated portion of this magical strength. The old men's part of the

Djungguan is called Wongar Dal. Wongar is the totemic spirit itself. 778 It is one of the beings which once lived in the earth and now lives in the subterranean waters. It is also the spirit or essence which enters the totemic emblem, so that when the old men's camp is called Wongar Wonga it means totemic spirit's camp. It is here that the totemic emblem is kept when it is not in use during the ceremony. Since the essence of the totemic spirit is supposed to be within the emblem, the camp literally is the place where Wongar lives. The young men who do not belong to the upper age group are told that he actually stays in this place.

852 The triangular dance ground, where the various dramatic dances are presented before the initiates, represents a snake's body and is also supposed to have the Wawilak sisters and their children inside it. It is supposed to face toward the southeast.

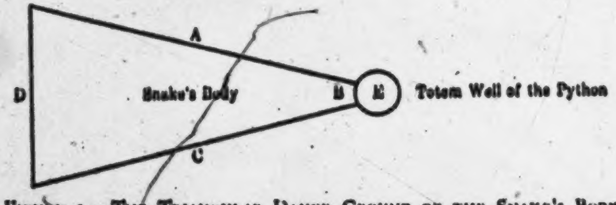

FIGURE 3.—THE TRIANGULAR DANCE GROUND OF THE SNAKE'S BODY

778 The old men are saturated with all the ritual power that pertains to the totem and its emblems, and the old men's camp therefore takes on a taboo quality, partly because the old men take maraiin there. 561 To a lesser degree, this is true of the camp where the circumcised men are allowed to go. They, to a lesser extent, have assimilated some of the ritual power which allows them to be on this part of the camp ground. Even the women have a minimum of maraiin: they know a [562] part of the ritual tradition; they dance around the warngaitja; they help in dramatizing the removal of the boy from the uncircumcised age group to the circumcised; they paint themselves with red ocher; and, of course, fundamentally they are Murngin social personalities.

852 The triangular dance ground is made by clearing off a smooth space and heaping a line of earth about ten inches high around its periphery. The earth is then covered with green leaves from any variety of tree. The end (D) is twenty to twenty-five feet across, and from D to B is some forty to fifty feet. A and C represent the side of the snake. "The Wawilak sisters said that (A) was Yiritja moiety and that (C) was Dua

852 moiety." This division refers to the dance ground and not to Yurlunggur, who was Dua. B is the snake's anus; D is the head where the initiates stand, both in the circumcision part of the ceremony and also in that portion devoted to showing and explaining the totemic emblem to the older initiates.

The circle E is the special house for Yurlunggur erected on the first day of the ceremony and is a windbreak about four feet high and fifteen feet across. The dancers who paint themselves as iguanas in the totem scene ceremony hide there while the earlier part of the Djungguan is taking place.

533 When the Yurlunggur dance ground is made, a cycle of songs is
sung over the man who gives his blood to the ceremony (see page 274)
778 by the old men. This makes the ground maraiin because it now possesses
the essence of Yurlunggur.

Native Interpretation.—The warngaitja is symbolical of the two boys
773 who are being circumcised. "The sticks are all the same as the boys
852 being cut. The bushes on top are all the same as the hair of those boys."
I was told each time I heard the Wawilak myth that when "the little
sister sang inside the house, the older sister danced around the house
just the same as women do now around the warngaitja pole in the
Djungguan." When new groups arrive at the Djungguan ceremony,
the ritual is being started, and they dance around the warngaitja singing
"A-wa!—a-wa!" it is the sound of flood water flowing or of rain
falling: "They do that because those two old women did that when
they tried to stop the rain." In the Djungguan ceremony older women
887 ordinarily do the dancing and wailing. "No young women, only old
562 women do this. Old women are better for the boys—it helps them
more. Those old women when they dance are all the same as those
Wongar women."

B. THE DANCING EACH EVENING AROUND THE WARNGAITJA. THE INITIATES ARE CARRIED INTO THE MEN'S GROUND 852

1. The women wail over the neophytes while dancing around the warngaitja pole (or poles); the men rush in and remove the boys to their own grounds.
2. The circle of men around the fire and the sequence of songs and dances.

1. Until the last day of the ceremony dances in the Djungguan are not held during the day except occasionally in the early morning. But

773 852 body and it is usually thought of as having the women and children inside it. Frequently the green leaves surrounding it are said to be the women after he has spewed them up. During one of the many times I was told the story of the Wawilak women, when the narrator got to the moment in the drama when the sisters were seeking something more powerful to stop Yurlunggur and they sang menstrual blood, he interrupted himself and said, "When the dance place for the Djungguan is square and not triangular it is a camp of these women. When it is this way [triangular] it is a snake's body. At Mirrirmina you can see the holes where all the sons of Yurlunggur crawled around the two women and you can see the dance ground where the snake fell after swallowing them."

852 E. The Bloodletting

778 1. Yurlunggur is painted.

796 2. Yurlunggur is blown over the men who give their blood; the names of the ancestors are called.

304 1. All during this section of the ceremony the totemic trumpet is kept in the old men's camp or in the specially built ceremonial hut (the python's totem well). During the preliminary stages of this section Yurlunggur is painted.

852 796 304 561 2. On the day before the circumcision a bloodletting ceremony takes place in the old men's camp. The blood is to be used as an adhesive substance to hold the birds' down and native cotton to the dancers' bodies. Before a man offers his blood for the first time Yurlunggur is blown all over his body; after the first time it is unusual. This ceremony is one of the ritual methods by which a man is admitted into the higher order of the men's association. Though it is not obligatory for him to go through this rite as it is for the young boy to go through the circumcision ceremony, all of the men feel it their privilege to contribute their blood either the first time they enter the old men's grounds or at some later period. Most men, while still in their prime, give their blood every time this ceremony is held.

852 796 Here is an account of one of the many blood sacrifice rituals witnessed by the author:

304 533 The old men sing over the man, Lika. The "mouth" of Yurlunggur is placed against him and the trumpeter blows all over his body while the trumpet's notes keep time with the slow rhythm of the singing sticks of the leader.

Several men proudly exhibit their arms which show five and six 852
cuts that have been made during previous ceremonies. 796

The man who gives his blood for the first time is considered to be 304
in a dangerous position. This is one of the reasons, the old men say, 826
why he is played over. "That man who gives his blood for the first time for Yurlunggur might get killed. That is why we play over him. That blood comes straight from his heart to his arm when it runs out. That is why we tie it at the top or it might all run out. The boy might get killed because his soul is in his heart and the blood comes from there for corroborees." "It is blood [man-gu] which makes people strong all their lives; if a man's blood runs out and he is emptied of all his blood that man dies and his soul is gone. We got this body because we have that blood. If that blood goes away we are empty inside."

It is believed that this blood, when it is on a man's body as a part 826
of his decoration for the ceremony, if touched by a woman will make 778
her ill or produce sores on her body, because it has had a totemic name given it and the essence of the totemic spirit has gone inside this blood. The blood of a man who has been hurt in an ordinary accident will not hurt a woman. She can rub against him and be all right. "The blood that hurts a woman is the spirit of the Wongar that is inside that blood. It has a big [sacred] name that the leader sang when the men cut their arms. The spirit that is inside that blood is not just that wooden trumpet but another one more inside [more sacred] and the totemic spirit itself, Yurlunggur.—That blood that man gives in the Djungguan is Wongar Derpal. [Derpal means magically powerful and strong.] That blood the old man gives to the dance people makes them derpal and it makes their feathers and bush cotton derpal. The meaning is like this: suppose you and I have come a long way and we reach a good camp and our people have one house empty and it is a good place for us and they take us and put us in it. We get in that house and have a good sleep and no one can hurt us because we have friends. That blood is just like that. It makes us feel easy and comfortable and it makes us strong. It makes us good. That derpal is like the head man. We have that derpal from that blood. It is in our body. It goes inside when we put that blood on it. That blood makes a very big thing."

The night of the day following the bloodletting, the procedure in 852
the main camp is changed. The old women start the evening's per- 796

Warumeri well, they come back to the ranga and go inside of it and into the well." 852 796

The souls of women likewise return: "When a woman dies she becomes a Bir-im-bir [spirit] Wongar and goes to the same well as a man. She can come back to her ranga and is like those two old Wawilak sisters." 775

When the men come out and take the boy away from the women, they are the snake or the flood and the women are the Wongar women who made the first camp. On the last evening when the men come out they stop at the edge of the camp and they sing rain. When the boys are left under the piles of bushes they are the children of the Wawilak women. "Those boys left there alone are all the same as those babies that were born to the Wongar women. They left their babies there the same way to dance: the women dancing around the Warngaitja mean that." When the men stand with their spears around the pole they sing rain, which means that the flood has come, and when they pull the warngaitja out of the ground and rush away and the others take the bushes off the boys and run away with them to the men's ground, the chorus sings flood. "That means that the flood came and took these two yam sticks and carried them away."—"A flood takes them away after the rain, that is why we sing Wa—wa—wa. That means that the flood water is running." 852 796 535 773

"When the boys lie there and the men pull the bushes off them that means that snake spitting them up. They are spirits now." (This refers to the first time the python swallows the two women.)

F. The Last Dances in the Men's Ground 852 302

1. The dancers are painted with human blood.
2. The boys who are to be circumcised are painted.
3. The initiates are shown the dances of the animals and the triangular ground and are instructed.
4. The older boys who have run away are caught and Yurlunggur comes out of the well and is shown to them.

1. The climax of the ceremony occurs next day. All the men paint with the blood that has been let the day before. The bloodletting occurs one day before the circumcision rite instead of the same day, because the exposure to the air gives the blood a more adhesive quality.

The blood is now sacred and powerful. It is, say the natives, as if it were a totemic emblem in itself. It has the power of Yurlunggur in it because he blew over the blood-giver. It is also powerful because the 852 302 778

852 302 778 leader walks among the men, who are decorating themselves with birds' down to take the part of various birds and animals in the coming ceremonial dances, and sings a song over their heads. He sings the taboo names of the creature the man is painting himself to represent. This makes the design and the man magically powerful.

852 302 One end of a small green stick from any tree is chewed into a brush and dipped into the blood, and the blood is painted over the body of the man to form the various designs used by the dancers. The paper bark dropped into the blood the day before is also used as a brush. Two men usually paint each other at the same time. The old men paint in the old men's camp, and the younger men go off by themselves. If the old men so desire, they may paint outside where the young men do. They do not let the neophytes see them decorate themselves for the ceremony.

[824] [431] 2. The boys who are to be circumcised are painted on the dance ground by older men. The totemic design of the clan is placed on each candidate's chest and abdomen, with the juice of an orchid bulb as the adhesive; blood is never used because it is magically too powerful for an uncircumcised boy. The man who paints the boy is always given a present by the father and mother. The neophytes are then led by the older men to the head of the snake ground. Sweat from the armpit of an old man (almost as powerful as blood) is rubbed on the eyelids of the boys to strengthen their eyes for the coming ceremony.

852 535 616 3. The division of dances that follows on this day of the circumcision is on a moiety basis. Dua men dance Dua animals and plants, Yiritja men dance Yiritja objects that belong to their world of culture, man and nature.

852 535 Two men run in with their spears fixed to their spear-throwers and point them straight at the boys as if they were going to throw them. The men have their baskets in their mouths as they often do when fighting. They return to the bush and rush in a second and third time. They are supposed to be fighting men and also catfish. The word for catfish is the same as that for one variety of fighters. The leader sings catfish while the men dance. Several old men stand beside the boys to instruct them and to prevent their running away.—Each group of dancers bows before the initiates just previous to leaving the dance ground.

After the "catfish" have retired, one man comes in dancing, carrying his spear-thrower and shaking it as if it were a bird's tail. He is a willy-wagtail. He pretends to pick flies off the branches of the trees

852 535 by each other while dancing inside it. While the messengers are away and the new trench is being dug, the Gunabibi cycle of songs and dances from the single male sea gull to the four Muits is gone through by the leader and his chorus.

2. The snakes are allowed to dance in the kartdjur, but none of the others except the palm tree are allowed to go inside it.

852 535 831 After the Gunabibi cycle, a single man filled with sexual desire and looking for a mate is danced. Then a man representing a single woman, also sexually hungry and looking for a mate, is danced. And finally the two together perform a dance; meeting at the entrance to the kartdjur, they simulate copulation but do not enter the "well."

The moon is now full, and people have been coming from the other clans to participate in the ceremony. Messages are usually brought by them that the two Yiritja snakes are coming with more people. Visitors and messengers take part in the dance around the kartdjur. All the men in the ceremony dance rock pythons copulating. The last dance of the entire series is that of the blue-tongued lizard. He dances in from a long way in the bush and goes inside the kartdjur. The appearance of this symbol indicates to all that a transition is taking place in the Gunabibi.

Native Interpretation.—"The kartdjur is that head inside the woman's vagina. It is all the same as her marn-bu [clitoris]. The crescent shape [shown by curve of fingers] is the way the two women laid down in the house before the snake swallowed them."

G. Yermerlindi

852
1. The Yeritja make Yermerlindi—two poles symbolizing the snake and a palm tree, and covered with blood.
2. The Yiritja camp; Dua give presents to the Yiritja.
3. The neophytes are placed on the kartdjur and sweat is placed on their eyes. Various dances include a clown element, the opossums, the Wawilak sisters, and finally blue-tongued lizard.
4. The initiates see Yermerlindi and are instructed and warned by the old men.
5. The Yermerlindi are knocked down and put in the kartdjur, and the men put blood on themselves.

852 778 1. During the last period, when the kartdjur is being used, the Yiritja moiety men participating in the Gunabibi ceremony have been making the yermerlindi emblems. They are about fifteen feet long and two and a half wide. They have a pole as a solid core and are

surrounded with grass and covered with paper bark. The bark is cov- 852
ered with human blood, on which is pasted birds' down or bush cotton, 778 ●
and on one yermerlindi a representation of Muit is painted in human [532]
blood against the white-feather or cotton background. This yermerlindi is another emblem of the rock python totem. The other is called a palm tree emblem, but it is known to be a python totem too, for it has a snake design upon it. The two are stood up by the Yiritja men. They say to each other, "Oh! They are true Wongars [totemic spirits]." The leader sings a song to prevent sickness since the yermerlindi are very powerful because Muit is inside them.

2. The Yiritja camp, where the yermerlindi is made, although still 852
on the men's ceremonial ground, is placed at one side of the actual 778
dancing ground. No Dua man can go near it. The Dua leader asks 616
from time to time by circumlocution if the yermerlindi is made, even when the emblem is completed.

While the Yiritja are making the yermerlindi, the Dua men send [431]
presents of food to them for making the yermerlindi. The Yiritja men send the Dua presents of kangaroo fat and red ocher with which to paint the Yiritja dancers.

The Dua leader of the Gunabibi once more asks if the Yiritja have finished their work, and they reply that yermerlindi is ready. The leader says, "One day more and then we will dance with yermerlindi." The Yiritja never say that yermerlindi is ready until the two messengers have returned with the visitors.

3. Following the blue-tongued lizard dance which marks the end 852
of a phase of the ceremony, the Gunabibi pauses so the men may eat their evening meal.

Later in the evening the neophytes are placed on the raised ground on the concave side of the kartdjur. Two leaders now conduct the ceremony. A new phase of the Gunabibi has begun. A long shallow trench of some fifty feet is extended from one end of the kartdjur. The neophytes have bushes placed under their armpits. The Yiritja snakes and the Dua leaders put their own arm sweat on the eyes of all the initiates.

All those who are not dancing stand on the raised ground with the 852
chorus. Two dancers sing reed warbler in a small piping tone which 533
forms a ludicrous contrast to the heavy male chorus. The onlookers in
chorus appreciate the deliberate humor of the contrast. The clown ele- 522
ment, although not definitely and elaborately developed, is present in this part of the ceremony as well as later.

852 535 [534] A large group of men, covered with white clay blown on them from the mouths of their fellow dancers, dance around the kartdjur and then go back to the end of the connecting trench and dance down to the kartdjur again. They are opossum dancers and grunt in time to the beating together of the two leaders' boomerangs. As they dance, the opossums and leaders start filling up the kartdjur with the loose earth around it.

The opossums are followed by two dancers who represent the Wawilak sisters. They have paper-bark bundles under their arms to represent their babies. At the end of each song of the chorus the dancers cry in a high whine in imitation of a newly born child. They squat inside the trough and cry again. The crying, in contrast with the heavy voices of the men's chorus, again has a note of absurdity in it and is a source of much laughter.

The last dance is the blue-tongued lizard. He is painted across his back with a white horizontal stripe. Keeping his legs very stiff, he wriggles along on his abdomen, with a wave-like motion, to the kartdjur. When he stops inside it the leader intones, "Gunabibi! Gunabibi!" over him. The hole is further filled until the greater part of it is covered.

852 778 4. The singing now changes to the song, yermerlindi. A fire is made. The Dua leader cries to the neophytes, "Look! See what you can see! I think Bapa Indi is coming out of the water."

The two Muit emblems are brought in; two men hold them upright with the rock pythons painted in blood on the white surfaces gleaming in the light of the many fires before the eyes of the frightened initiates.

The neophytes are told by the old men that the emblems are real pythons, that the spirit of Muit is inside them, and that they are very dangerous, even though they have been made by men, for Muit now walks around the jungle like a man. They are also warned to tell nothing of what they have seen to the women and uninitiated boys.

5. Two men bring in a pole and hold it horizontally about waist-high from the ground, on the concave side of the kartdjur. The yermerlindi are stood on the convex side. They are pushed over and allowed to hit the pole, while all the chorus cries out in shrill tones. They are picked up and again allowed to fall. This continues until the feather headpieces on the top of the emblems fall off.

852 The yermerlindi are put in the kartdjur. The grass around them is burned and the inner poles are charred. While this is being done,

blood is let from several men's arms, and as the fire burns, all the men 852
cover themselves with blood and kangaroo fat.

Native Interpretation.—The palm tree totemic emblem is supposed 852
to be the palm tree "on the outside, but inside it is all the same as a
snake."—"That first ranga is called the palm tree ranga because the 778
Yiritja make it, but the inside [sacred] meaning is all the same as
the snake. When we stand them up all the Yiritja say, 'they are
Wongars all right,' and the leader sings to keep off sickness, for
Wongar is inside them and might make us sick."

There is no question but that the Murngin believe the totemic emblems 852
have the totemic spirit inside them, and there is considerable
evidence that the totem is believed to take possession of the emblem 778
and move around as a snake does. On one of the nights that yermerlindi 776
totems were first shown, one of the Yiritja men came into my camp and announced to some of the natives and myself that he had gone over to the Yiritja ground where that Wongar snake was, meaning the totemic emblem. He said, "I am afraid of that one. I am small boss for him [younger brother of some of the leaders]. He is close up to the water when he is that way, and maybe he will walk about and kill me and everybody. Yermerlindi always walks about." He meant that when the totemic emblem had been made, sung over, and completed, it was in much the same condition as the totemic spirit is when it lives in the totemic water hole; and with the totemic spirit in the emblem and outside of the water hole, it was dangerous to man. This same man told me of an experience in another Gunabibi ceremony when Yermerlindi was left by himself for a night: Yermerlindi got up and walked around by himself. The discussions among the men during the ceremonies all proved that the statements of this one man are generally believed to be true of ordinary behavior for the yermerlindi emblem. There is ample direct statement from a large number of natives that when the Yiritja men make the totemic emblems for the Gunabibi they sing over them, and this puts power and the totemic spirit in the yermerlindi.

A night after a Gunabibi ceremony when the yermerlindi was 776
shown, one of the men had the following experience: He couldn't
sleep and his sleeplessness continued for some time. Presently he heard 781
the whistle of Muit for him, he said. He raised his head and listened.
Muit whistled again. The man listened very carefully to make sure it
wasn't something or someone around him, but he heard it again. He

age-grade sense. Their beards demonstrate their belonging to the mature 796
men's age grade. The red parrot feather decoration on the 773
beards helps to ritualize this symbol of manliness.)

J. The Higher Totems Are Shown the Older Men

1. The old men leave the young men and show their higher totems 796
to each other. 535

1. Following the ceremony of showing the totems to the older 561
young men, who represent an age-grade stratum of the male division
of the tribe higher than the recently initiated boys, iguana is repeated;
then follows the sea-water dance which has been described, and
finally iguana, with the usual conventional ending of "benbur benbur."

Only the older men see the higher rangas. The young men are left 796
and the older men go inside the bush to look at the rangas which only 561
they are allowed to see. The string is taken off all the totemic emblems 431
at this time. This string is presented to members of the opposite
moiety, or very frequently, as has been said before, kutara gives it to 616
mari and mari to kutara (they are of the same moiety) as a demonstration
of the solidarity of their relationship. If people who are somewhat
distant, therefore a bit strange, ask for this ranga string, it
arouses a considerable feeling of antagonism in the owner. It is
usually said, "Have people lost their heads? Can't they think? We
will just give them ordinary food later. We won't give them string."
—"If they are very good friends we can give them food, but the food
is not given a power name."

K. The Eating of the Sacred Bread, and Conclusion of the Ceremony 796 778

1. The bread is eaten by those of near kin.
2. The string is removed from the emblems and the neophytes are instructed. 514

1. The leader sings over the palm bread (or yams) which is put in the ashes and cooked. He calls out the totem names of the various rangas (kookaburra, banitja, etc.). This is supposed to infuse the bread with the power names of the rangas and make it "just the same as a ranga," which means that the totemic spirit resides within the bread. Only the men who understand can eat this, which means only the men who are near relations and who have been initiated.

The Murngin always eat in this way after all ceremonies. To outside tribes the people say, "This is maraiin that belongs to the Narra," 796 but the power name is not given to the food for them. The natives 778 agree that this food is eaten because all Wongar yolno did the same 574 thing. If the leader gives the food with his name to it to his friends [688] from another tribe, his own clanspeople would wait until there was an opportunity and kill him, because they do not want to have that name go to another tribe.—All my most reliable informants gave me this information.

Yiritja and Dua both eat this food, providing they are from one country, which really means, if they are closely related. My most intelligent informant said this: "Dorng and Ilkara [two men of the Liaalaomir group] can eat our food which has a big name because their sister married one of our people. It is all right for the Ritarngo to eat Warumeri and Wangurri food which has a big name because we have one ranga, because we are friends. Sometimes we give our ranga from the Warumeri side to the Ritarngo and they give us rangas from the land side. That is because that duck came from the Ritarngo to us in Wongar days."

796 2. The string is taken from the totemic emblems, wrapped around the hand into a neat ball, and placed in a basket. The carved-log ranga (see page 340) is hidden once more in the mud of the ceremonial leader's totem well. It is said that the leader likes to have them all [262] remain there. The men can eat no animal food, but only bush (vegetable) food, until they have been painted. The old men say to [867] them, "You must do what we tell you. Put your head and ears to these things. You don't want to swear at your old men or your big brothers. You want to talk a good way to them. We don't want you to steal. You don't want to go running after other men's women." The old men also tell the younger ones which rangas belong to the [869] different totemic wells and which wells belong to the various clans. This ends the Dua Narra ceremony.

Native Interpretation.—The old men say, "This makes one people."

THE YIRITJA NARRA CEREMONY

A. Preparation

1. The same general preparations are made as those before the Dua Narra.

1. The Yiritja Narra ceremony parallels the Dua Narra rites. After a log has been cut, scraped, and carved, the leader sends out word to the various surrounding clans that a Narra is to be held. A Duni

in the general topography of northeastern Arnhem Land. The clan 773
structure is not a mere exogamic group which occupies a certain ex- 614
tended territory and whose people earn their living from this area. In the first place, all its female members are usually not attached to the land itself, for after reaching early adolescence they go as wives and potential mothers to other clans than their own; the wives and mothers of the local clan come from other areas and are therefore not thought of as belonging to this particular piece of land. Spatial unity is disrupted and the Murngin clan is seen to be an entirely different social entity from our modern state. Further, the economic unit of this people is not the clan but the horde.

The horde's membership is composed of men from a number of 621
clans as well as of women from different groups. The clan composition
of a horde becomes more heterogeneous during the dry season when 614
an area can support a larger number of people, than in the rainy 423
season when food is scarce. The male membership of the clan is seldom spatially intact except during the ritual season when all of the male members are more likely to be present than in the rainy period. The clan's so-called "ownership" of the land has little of the economic about it. Friendly peoples wander over the food areas of others and, if their area happens to be poor in food production, possibly spend more of their lives on the territory of other clans than on their own. Exclusive use of the group's territory by the group is not a part of the Murngin idea of land "ownership." The ownership of the land is more in the "nature of things," as seen by the Murngin. The land is not outside the clan but is an integral part of it. As has been said, it cannot be taken from the clan, for it is of the clan and made such by the order of existence. "Wongar made it that way and that's why we have these things today."

Politically the clan is almost impotent when it comes to positive 614
action. It is impossible to obtain group action, even for the wergild,
which will function to the extent that discipline can be enforced and 622
individual action prohibited in a blood feud. The ceremonial leader is considered head man, and if physically able and of sufficient talent, he is also war leader, but his power is at an absolute minimum except as a ritual leader; it is in the field of ritual and not of government that he exercises his leadership.

The names of the country, the names of the wells, and the list of 103
totems as well as the names of the mythological ancestors all form 614
fundamental parts of the clan unity. All of the names of the clan 773
182
778

103 wells, both the sacred and the camp names, refer to the totemic objects
614 either directly or indirectly and usually describe some aspect of the
clan's country or rationalize its relation to the totem. The totemic
773 mythological ancestors generally have the same names as the well.
182 All of these elements are unified by one or more myths. These
778 myths in turn are dramatized by the various rituals enacted by the
clanspeople so that when a man is asked what totems a particular clan
possesses, he ordinarily thinks of the rituals they use and the myths
the rituals portray.

The names of the clan wells either elaborate the detail of the myth as it is expressed by the totem or they give distinct additions which relate other totemic myths to the well. In no case does the name of a well have no relation to the totems of the clan.

The clansmen are identified with the totemic well by the fact that
614 they come from it and are allowed to be born by the action of the
778 totemic spirit that resides within the well; they are identified with the
182 well because at death they will go back to it and because all of their
kin who have died and those living, with whom they have had all of
their social relations, are or will be either in this well into which their
own soul returns or in other like clan wells; and finally, their well-being and that of their fellow clansmen and of other clans are dependent upon the proper enactment of the seasonal rituals which demonstrate the mana or power of the totem. At death not only does the soul go into the well but it also enters into the totemic emblem itself and becomes a part of it.

551 The names of the living are all taken from some part of the totemic
complex and refer directly or indirectly to the totem. One exception
182 to this is the new group of Malay terms which, however, have been
771 sacralized by the real ancestors' possessing them, and which, after a
period of taboo and when the ancestors are within the totemic water
holes, are passed on to the living. Another exception to the rule is the
group of nicknames, which are also inheritable by the living from
the dead. The spiritual life of a Murngin, then, is entirely made up
771 from totemic elements, and his whole participation within that part
182 of the community which makes him a social man and separates him
from the adolescent children and women is within the totemic complex itself. (This of course is a fundamental aspect of age grading and is treated under that head.) As a male social personality, a man is part of the totem, and in all his social relations with the male part

of his group he is identified with the totem. This is true for all other 771
individuals in his adult age grade, so that the totality of the males' 182
individual relations forms the whole of the totemic behavior. It is the sacred tradition of the clan groups, as held in the minds of the individuals of the adult male age grade—plus ritualistic behavior as overt demonstrations of these traditional beliefs held and possessed by the male group—which forms the totemic configuration. The group in this sense does unconsciously worship itself. The totem well and the totemic emblem, being concrete symbols of the totality of the sacred traditions, become symbols of group unity and symbolize the group; and to the extent that the ritual sanctions hold and force subordination of all behavior to their end, the sacred dominates and controls the ordinary life of the individuals within the clans, and therefore of the social life of the clans themselves. The Murngin, when asked why this is so or that exists, always reply, "Wongar did it this way," "Those two old women made it that way," or, "Such and such a totem did so and so in those Wongar times." If their associations are allowed to proceed to deeper levels of explanation, various fundamental myths make their appearance within the thinking, and it soon becomes clear that the categories to which the speakers refer their ideas and the things of the world in their ultimate meanings are these myths. The possession of all land is made absolute and final to the Murngin by the statements of the myth which describe certain behavior of the totems which took place on that land, and which identify the clan and the land as one because the clan has certain totems. The clan's totemic ancestors have certain totemic names, its children arrive by relations with certain totems, it possesses and practices certain rituals, and its dead go to certain totemically named wells. The Murngin clan itself, then, is a membership of a certain unilateral group of people whose unity is expressed by the possession of a totemic configuration and the practice of exogamy.

The mana of the Murngin well is due not to any mundane biological 778
value its water may have for the group, but rather to the spiritual power of the water. If the water had physiologic value alone, then all the water holes would be placed in the same category by the Murngin. As it is, certain wells are considered sacred, and certain others ordinary and placed in a natural category. The spiritual elements in the sacred well include the totem and totemic ancestors as well as the souls of the dead and those who are to be born. The Narra well also

● 178 acts as a repository for the totemic emblems after the Narra ceremonies.

The clan well as an organizing idea can be used in ritual and myth, but it has not the flexibility and ease of manipulation held by a small totemic object. The totemic emblem can be used in a ceremony as a concrete expression of the ideas of the sacred. It becomes a tangible expression of python, barrimundi, or some other totemic spirit. The infinite variety of ideas and feelings which are a part of the beliefs making up the totemic spirit can be symbolized and expressed in the concrete image of the totem, and this object can be manipulated in the rituals. The ritual handling of the totemic image can and does express, through a series of totemic dances, the various attitudes of awe, respect, and supplication, as well as the fundamental social ideas and myth-symbols which are a part of the totemic configuration. The neophyte holds his head down, the old men tell him of the respect and care with which he must treat the emblem, and how he must live his life under the code of Murngin morals after seeing this sacred totem. The totemic trumpet is blown over the initiates, and the myth-symbol of the great python swallowing the women is expressed; a man dances with an emblem in the Narra ground, and a certain myth of his clan is symbolically expressed; a man cuts his arm and while the blood pours from it the python trumpet is blown over him, and the profanement of the python pool with all its complex social ramifications and subtle implications of value and sanctions is expressed symbolically and simply because this concrete trumpet-emblem (imbued with totemic mana by the agency of the totemic design and totemic ritual and song) can be handled and moved and seen and heard.

196 The great rituals like the Gunabibi and Ulmark, which bring together, from widely separated clans and tribes, people who often
182 have old scores unsettled and are ready to burst into open conflict, function as organizing units of these people during the period of the ritual, and also after they separate, for, with the aid of the myth, the rituals leave in the minds of the natives a feeling of oneness, of relationship to the larger group. The peoples who attend the ceremony organize themselves spatially in accordance with their location in the horde—that is, they camp in the same direction and relative distance with respect to the host clan. For example, if the Warumeri gave a Narra, the Kalpu of the English Company Islands would be north of them, the Kalpa still farther north, the Liagaomir would be west, and so on. The subsection (see Chapter III on Kinship) enters

796 773 182 783 swallowing the women in the Wawilak myth. The bathers in the Djunkgao rite must cover themselves entirely just as the Wawilak women were covered by the snake (water) in the western myth. After this the males are sufficiently clean to eat their ritual bread ceremonially.

773 796 In the Narra there is less definition of the various symbols than in the Wawilak group of rituals, and in the Yiritja Narra even less than in the Dua. In the Yiritja Narra the great floods bring the totems; the dances are basically the same as in the Dua, where there is the dance with the totems on the men's ground, the calling out of the entire list of clans of the moiety, the dancing in the ring, the use of spears, the ceremonial bathing, the later showing of totems, and the eating of communion bread. In the Yiritja there is no deviation from the fundamental pattern of the Dua Narra, but the mythology is explicitly attached to the ritual by making the foam (semen in the Dua ritual) land in the Yiritja ritual; and it is only by inference that the whole of the Yiritja Narra is seen to depend on the interpretation of the Dua Djunkgao ritual for its meaning; e.g., the ascendency of men over the women is demonstrated by calling out the names of the wells each night, which symbolizes the removal of the totems from the women.

796 Basically the totemic Ṇarra ceremonies are, first, purification rites by which the whole group is "baptized" (and it is this element which is most emphatically accented); second, expressions of group solidarity in communal eating of purified totemic bread by the purified group; third, rites emphasizing both clan structure and rigid dual division (by showing clan totems and calling out names of clan wells, and by the division of the Narra ceremony into two—Dua and Yeritja—rituals when in reality it is but one). Of all the rituals involved in the high totemic ceremonies, the Yiritja Narra is the simplest and least elaborated in its expression and the Gunabibi and Ulmark the most proliferated and explicit.

773 ●778 The individual totems found in all the wells supposedly visited by Wawilak and Djunkgao women are all pieces of the general mosaic of the myth. For example, in the Liaalaomir where the Wawilak women visited there are the following totems: carpet snake's head, carpet snake's anus, caterpillar, carpet snake, carpet snake's neck, carpet snake's tongue (this is also lightning), an iguana, green ant, singing stick, a palm tree, ridgepole of a house, house rafters, uprights, forked stick used for house construction, sea gull, wood brought in on the

tide, porpoise, moon fish, a rock, young porpoise, morning star, bamboo spear, stone spear, spear-thrower, variety of the wild bee, boomerang and white feather string. 773 778

The same is true among the Djawark where the Djunkgao women visited; for example, there are the following totems: menstruating girl, woman's mat and apron, mature woman, young girl, clitoris, cane, yam stick, singing sticks, fire, tidal floatwood, red parrot, grub in lily pond, black ant's nest, sea gull, wood brought in on the tide, porpoise, moon fish, a rock, young porpoise, morning star, bamboo spear, stone spear, spear-thrower, variety of the wild bee, boomerang and white feather string.

Additional totems of a higher order as well as the lowest garma forms will be discussed below. (The garma are fully treated under Mortuary Rites.)

The totems are the concrete expression of the underlying concepts of society in its relation to nature and in the relation of the internal institutions to each other; and these concepts are embedded in the myths. This means that the concepts are a part of the myth and subject to its interpretation, as the natives testify when they interpret the rituals of the various myths as well as the myths themselves.

The usual native generalization is that "these two sisters brought all the ranga," but it can be demonstrated that some wells have additional totems which have separate myths. These latter totems and myths belong to the local organization and are secondary elaborations which symbolize either clan or moiety oppositions or solidarities. The separation of the local organization myths from the larger and more comprehensive ones gives us a clue to some of the subsidiary themes and smaller subdivisions found within the larger segments of the rituals associated with the Wawilak and Djungguan myths.

The shark myth of the Djirin, for example, is added to the general configuration of the Narra by having the shark dance symbolically his breaking through the land in Buckingham Bay. Only over a long period of years could one collect all the local organization myths and determine the exact place in which they all fit into the general pattern. I regret to say I did not accomplish this. In the time at my disposal, however, I did collect a sufficient number to discover their general patterns.

The garma totems are all lower than the rangas (high totems). The rangas are preponderantly connected with the myths of the two sisters, but the garma generally are not. The garma rituals are

113 associated with mortuary rites or cleansing ceremonies throughout the
778 area, but in the north and east some of them also function as curing
rituals for sickness.

The Narra and garma myths all express the fundamental idea of
113 the movement backward and forward of the tides in the spring floods
796 either in the present period or in the mythological past; the Wawilak
783 myth and ritual leave out the movement of the tide except in a minor
way, and concentrate on the flood. The essential formula of the Narra links together the sacred names of the moiety's clan water holes: the leaders shout out during an important part of the ritual in fairly exact order in a Dua Narra first only Dua clans and in a Yiritja Narra first only Yiritja clans. The moiety clan water holes are further tied together: in the Dua Narra by relating the names of the clan wells to the wanderings of the Djunkgao sisters; in the Yiritja by the actions of the various mythological creatures. That the underlying ideas of the Djunkgao myth are ceremonial uncleanliness and purification by means of the ritual is demonstrated by its following fundamental elements: (1) the women's wanderings and planting of the totems; (2) their incest and defilement; and (3) the taking of the totems by the men.

The Yiritja Narra account shows clearly that the spring flood is made not only by the rain but also by the rise of the water in the totem water holes which overflow at this time. In this ritual it seems rather an overflow of the totem well than a flood coming directly from the rain. In any case, the well water is always a strong contributing element to the flood covering the earth. The rise of the water, then, is something more than the symbolization of the flood as male and spiritual, as in the Djungguan; it is here an actual outflow of water from the sacred centers of the land, which causes the growth of new plants and animals and the refertilizing of the earth. It is the male principle fertilizing the earth. The women are covered with semen and made fertile, as is the land. The "white stuff" on the Djunkgao women was unclean and compelled purification by washing because the clansmen of old had broken the most fundamental law of the social code. The social relations needed purification and the bathing ritual resulted. The modern social organization needs purifying for past misbehaviors, particularly those of a sexual nature (see pages 78-90 for examples of sexual code infringement). It is felt that nature, inextricably organized on the pattern of man's social organization, needs purifying as man does, since both are in the same social

774 spirit. It can be seen reflected in the water when one looks in it. It
775 comes to one during good dreams. The warro, when a man dies,
becomes "all the same as a fish." It lives with and in the totemic emblems. "He walks about with the ranga in the water down below in the well. Our old people reckon this way: he must be all the same as a fish because if a man's canoe tips over out in the middle water of the ocean that old relative's warro comes and helps us, saves our life and takes us up to the shore. If my son went out in the deep water with his canoe he would call out for Banitja [one of the totems of his clan]. After he had taken sweat from under his arm and spit into the water, then he would call out for the warro of his marikmo and mari. Those warros of his mari and marikmo would come all the same as a fish to help him. Warros swim and look like fish. When I look in the water he looks like me. Banitja and warros will also save a man from the sharks as well as from drowning. All the people have warros."

The trickster soul is called shadow soul before death and mokoi when it leaves the body and goes into the jungle and bush country. "Our old people reckon that the shadow soul is all the same as a bad spirit. It's that thing that makes me bad. My shadow always comes with me. The shadows of other things and creatures [beside man] are not souls but only shadows." The mokoi soul is supposed to live more or less all over the body. It is a kind of vague duplicate of it. Sometimes one is told that only the head of a man is made into a mokoi at his death and that mokoi has no body. In the pictures drawn of it and the representations made in the dances, the mokoi is always possessed of a body, but it is distorted and made to appear ugly and unpleasant.[1]

The warro is constantly undergoing change of status. It originates
182 in the totem well, comes to its human father in a dream under miracu-
774 lous circumstances where it is directed to its mother's womb, lodges
778 there, is born in a normal number of months, and then lives in the
heart of the new human organism during the period of the organism's
771 life of the flesh unless it is stolen by a black sorcerer. After death there is a period of some indecision between the land of the living and the land of the dead, but it finally returns to the totemic well whence it came. It is in the symbol of the soul and its relations to the sacred and profane elements in Murngin civilization that we find mirrored the structure and values of the society. The soul supplies the eternal element to the cultural life of an individual Murngin. It lifts man from

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[1] The Murngin ideas about the mokoi spirit are varied and somewhat confused.

the simple profane animal level and allows him to participate fully in 182
the sacred eternal values of the civilization that was, is, and will be. 774
It finally and eternally ties the man whose heart it occupies to his
totem, the symbol of all clan unity in Murngin culture, since the soul 778
at death is one of the prominent elements in the configuration of as- 771
sociated items found in the clan's totemic water, the water which is the essence of life. Here live the great totemic ancestors who existed in the time of the Wawilak creator sisters when the Wongar totems walked the earth, and whose sacred names are used by the profane living only when these living have been purified by the great rituals, when they are part of the sacred and eternal elements in the culture, when man and his totems participate as one in the totemic rituals. Here, too, in the well, lie the totemic ancestors who died at the beginning of time, and the more recently dead whose emotional bonds with the living are still strong. The more recent ancestors who have gone through the long purifying mortuary ritual which removed all the profane elements of the personality (whose mokoi spirit has gone into the bush with his other evil comrades) are, in their nature, of such sacredness that they can be absorbed into the body of the totem itself. And when the totemic essence of the totem animals is induced into the emblem, they also enter and participate in the spiritual life of the Murngin during the great rituals and then return to the sacred water hole. After the ritual, the emblem is buried beneath the mud of the totem well and allowed to rot, and the ancestor spirits and the totemic spirit return to the subterranean depths. Man goes through exactly the same cycle of existence as the totemic spirit. The totemic spirit enters into the sacred water hole, goes through the ordinary water at the top of the well into the subterranean depths, and finally into the totem water beneath, where the Wongar ancestors live, becoming a part of the sacred configuration. The soul does exactly the same thing.

The soul, the totemic spirit, the Wongar or totemic ancestors, are all expressions of the fundamental sacred essence, the ultimate symbol of which is the totemic well, which is the repository of all the individual items which have been or will be incarnate in man or his religious objects.

The kinship organization classifies the social elements of ordinary 182
behavior. The primary kinship system regulates the basic behavior
such as marriage, descent of children, gift-making, economic behavior, 614
et cetera. The moiety and clan generalize and classify this detailed kin- 775
ship behavior into larger patterns; and they also articulate the ordinary

182 daily life of the people as it is lived by the kinship group, to the totem well, and the individual to the realm of the sacred and the dead.

614 115 The unilateral clan differentiates certain lines of patrilineal kin from the kinship totality and organizes them into a spiritual group, the focal center of which is the clan totem well. The totem well as the integrating nucleus of clan solidarity organizes clan sentiments into a sacred unity. The basic factor in this spiritual organization is the relation of the living to the dead and the unborn. The dead souls are grouped into spiritual aggregates based on clan organization. They do not enter into general tribal groupings in the land of the dead, they do not divide on the dual basis of the moiety; but the various male relatives are separated in death if they do not belong to the same clan. Although in life there is an intensely close relationship between the mother's brother and his nephew, in death these relatives are separated by the division of the kinship system into clan groupings of the dead. It is, then, the clan division of the kinship system which orientates the living Murngin to the profane and sacred parts of the totem well and at death places him within the sacred part of the realm of the dead.

182 778 614 The two great classifying structures of Murngin culture are the kinship system and the totem well, both of which generalize the various elements in the total structure. The first basically controls the ordinary daily behavior of the Murngin, and the second organizes spiritual behavior and regulates the activities of the dead. The totem well classifies the totality of the sacred elements of the Murngin social structure. The totemic spirits, the totemic ancestors, the unborn souls and the souls of the dead are all thought to reside within the subterranean depths of the well. It is difficult to distinguish these sacred objects from one another. Even the recently dead soul can become a part of the totem and return in the totemic emblem to participate with it in the great rituals of the people.

The relation of the living to the dead and also the relation of the profane to the sacred can best be presented by Chart XVI. The line A-B separates the sacred from the profane. The seven vertical lines in the lower section which are crossed by the five lateral lines to form the checkerboard with the star at the right center, represent the primary kinship structure of the Murngin. The vertical lines are the patrilineal descent lines and the horizontal are those of generation. The cross-sections of the two form the kinship personality. The star represents Ego. His line and the line to the right of him, which is the mari-

marelker, have arrows pointing up from them to a circle which 182
is their clan; the next line at the right, kutara-gurrong line, has an 778
arrow which points into another well. On the left side of Ego's line is
found the gawel-galle line, combined with the dumungur-waku, and 614
the dué-waku line, combined with the natchiwalker-gawel line into

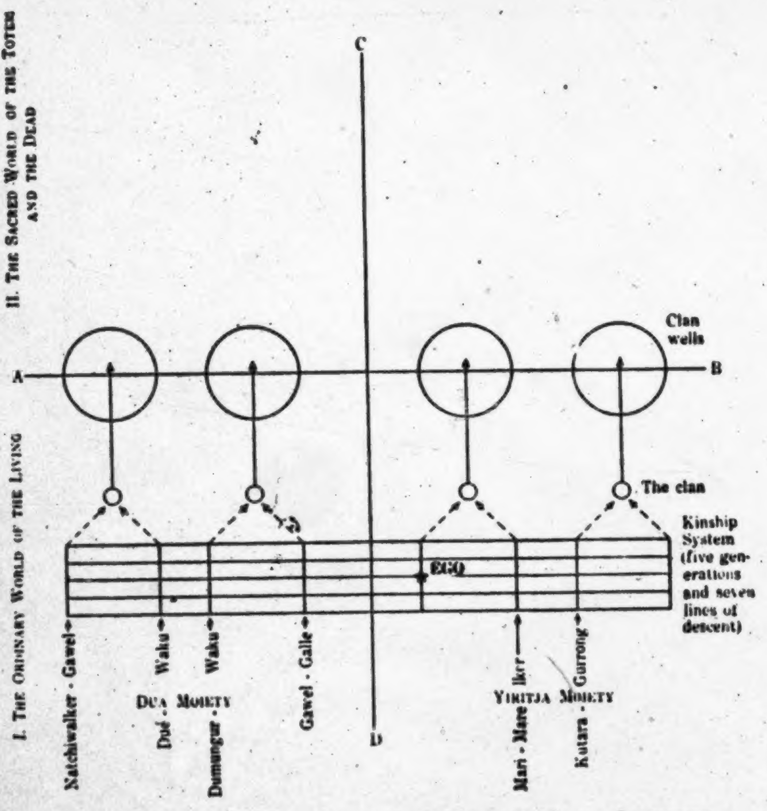
II. The Sacred World of the Totem and the Dead
I. The Ordinary World of the Living
C
D
A
B
Clan wells
The clan
Kinship System (five generations and seven lines of descent)
EGO
Natchiwalker - Gawel
Dué - Waku
Dumungur - Waku
Gawel - Galle
Dua Moiety
Yiritja Moiety
Mari - Marelker
Kutara - Gurrong

CHART XVI.—THE PLACE OF DEATH IN THE MURNGIN SOCIAL STRUCTURE

another clan group. Leading out of each clan circle is an arrow which enters into a circle above it, which symbolizes the clan well. It will be noticed that the symbol of each clan well will be found half below the line A-B which separates the sacred and profane, and half above it. The arrow leading from the clan to the clan well symbolizes the ritual relation of the profane to the sacred and serves to illustrate

182 how the total life of the people is organized by, and pointed into, the
778 clan well. It also, by piercing the lower and entering the upper half of the well circle, demonstrates that part of the relationship of clan to
614 well is profane and part sacred. By profane behavior we mean, for example, the general camp use of the well for drinking water, the women soaking palm nuts in it, et cetera.[2]

This chart sums up the whole structure of Murngin society and relates the world of the ordinary to the world of the totem from the point of view of the whole group and from that of the individual participating in it.

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[2] The dead in the totem wells are related since the living relatives are related because of the organization of the kin into the primary kinship structure. This makes it possible for the souls in the totem wells on the left-hand side of the C-D line, which is the Dua moiety grouping of clans, to stand in kin relation to the souls and the totem wells on the right-hand side of the line. Because of the articulation of the kinship structure to the clans, the totems at each well are also related. This is made possible because the patrilineal lines that enter into each totemic well called the totems of that well by the terms father and grandfather. The collateral relatives call these totems by the term that they would actually use if this totem were the real father of the clansman who uses such a term. For example, if a man in clan A calls his shark totem "father," his waku would call this totem nati.

287 292 of a cone and is about one and a half to four inches long. It flares out at the feather end, where it has a diameter of about three inches. The hafting material is always painted.

The diameter of the bunch of feathers has two norms, according to the species of birds' feathers used. The first norm ranges around fourteen to sixteen inches, and the second from twenty-two to twenty-six inches. The feathers of the former are emu, black and white cockatoo, black goose, native companion, ibis, egret, jabiru and heron. The latter is always composed of emu tail feathers. Sometimes, instead of being hafted to a pin, the feathers are attached to a loop of string large enough to go around the wearer's head and allow the headdress to hang down the back of his neck and body. The pin type is used in the Gunabibi ceremony, both for making the "head of Yermerlindi," the Great Father Snake, and for the male dancers. The latter wear the feathers attached to the peak of a "dunce cap."

The kurt kurt type of headdress has the same general shape as the Gunabibi type, except that the feathers are spread out fanwise, and the beeswax, which is usually used instead of resin, is flattened instead of [237] conical. The pin is usually a sting-ray prong, since the barb on this adheres to the wearer's hair more easily than wood or bone, but sticks and bones are sometimes used. The pin is about one to two inches long, the wax about three-quarters of an inch in length. The feather part of the headdress has two norms, one of which is eight inches and the other twelve. The smaller one is composed of crests of the sulphur-crested cockatoo, the twelve-inch one from the wings or tail of an emu. The kurt kurt is worn in such a manner that the fanlike feathers form a brim resembling that of a modern cap or eye shade.

287 293 The feather fan is made the same way as the kurt kurt headdress except that stiff wing feathers of the jabiru or black goose are used instead of the softer feathers of the kurt kurt. A fan is used when making a fire or as a fly swatter. Often the lower wings are cut from the carcass of the jabiru or black goose and used as fans without further treatment.

778 *Rangas (Totemic Emblems)*.—Technically the totemic emblems divide into two main classes. The fundamental structure of each is governed by the materials of which it is made. The first type is the wrapped paper-bark form, and the second the carved wooden type. An occasional third type is the stone ranga. Each may have additions to its main structure, but basically there is no variation. Still another type of ranga is formed when mythical paintings are placed on an article of the material culture which is the totem of the group (stone axe, bark boat, et cetera).

Designs are painted on all rangas.[5]

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[5] The designs used and their meanings will not be discussed here, since we are considering only the technological processes.

Type I. Wrapped Paper Bark Ranga.—This type divides into six main varieties. They are:

(1) Bifurcated Fish Tail Ranga

Paper bark is torn from a tree and folded into a solid flattened cylindrical mass which tapers from a blunt to a fairly narrow end. The whole surface of the emblem is wrapped with one continuous vegetable fiber string. A notch of four or five inches is formed at one end of the emblem to represent a fish tail. At times a stick is sharpened and pushed into the small end of the body for a distance of about four to five inches (sometimes through the whole paper-bark core) to form the tail. Often a tail is constructed by dividing the small end into two halves and wrapping each half with string.

This ranga is also made in carved wood.

Measurements:

Total length: one to two foot variation, norm sixteen inches.

Total width: one and three-quarters to four and one-half inches variation, norm three inches (widest part).

Thickness: one-quarter inch to one and three-quarters inch variation, norm one and three-quarters inch.

(2) Bird-headed Ranga

The same technique is used as for (1), the only difference being the shape, which represents the neck and beak of a long-necked and long-beaked bird. A sharpened stick is carved at one end into two projecting points to represent the open beak of a bird, and is shoved into the small end of the paper bark. The effect is also obtained by splitting the paper bark and adding beeswax to strengthen and hold it in place.

This variety is also duplicated in carved wood.

Measurements:

Length: ten to thirty-three inch variation, norm twenty-seven inches.

Diameter: two to four inch variation, norm two and three-quarters inches.

(3) Fish Mouth Ranga

The wrapping technique is also used with this form. Two barbed sticks are put into the large end of the paper bark, the barbs turning inward to represent the mouth of [illegible] fish.

Measurements:

Length: two feet to two feet, six inches.

Width: two inches to three inches.

Prongs: three and one-half to seven inches.

(4) Flat-tailed Fish Ranga

This type has a paper-bark core wrapped with fiber string and the barbed prongs of Type (3); but in addition a sharpened stick is inserted into the

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small end of the paper bark which has a flat square piece of beeswax at the end to represent a fish tail.

Measurements:
Length: two feet to two feet, six inches.
Width: two to three inches.
Prongs: three and one-half to seven inches.

(5) Oblong Ranga

This is a solid core of paper bark wrapped with string. It symbolizes clouds, cycad palms, et cetera.

Measurements:
Length: eleven inches to sixteen inches.
Width: two to three inches.
Thickness: one and one-half inches.

(6) Rod-form Ranga

The paper bark is wrapped into a long, slender rod-like shape and is hung with pendants of human hair tipped with cockatoo feathers. The top usually has a crest of parrot feathers.

Measurements:
Length: twenty-nine inches.
Diameter: two inches.

Type II. Carved Wooden Ranga.—The wooden type is usually carved from a light wood (stringy bark). A small log is split into two parts and one portion cut into the shape desired, or the entire log is used.

In addition to the carved wooden rangas mentioned under Type I, there are the following varieties:

(1) Oblong Ranga

The ends of this form may be slightly rounded or square. The carved wood may or may not be wrapped with string. It is always painted. Parallel lines are incised around the oblong form.

Measurements:
Length: eighteen to thirty-nine inches, norm twenty-four inches.
Width: two to four and one-half inches, norm three inches.

(2) Barbed Ranga

This variety is found only in the western part of northeast Arnhem Land and properly belongs to the people around the Liverpool River. It is unwrapped and painted. Its measurements are about the same as those of Type (1).

(3) Pronged Ranga (Garawark variety)

There are three varieties of this type, based on measurements.

This type has two flattened sides slightly convex and two prongs in one or both ends; the prongs and body are carved from one piece of wood. Frequently the whole or part of the body is wrapped with feathered fiber

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string; at other times it is only painted with totemic designs. The wrapped types are also painted. Opossum string fringe is sometimes added to the wrapping.

Usually this type represents a mythical fish, but sometimes (in the west) a woman.

Measurements:

(a) Length: two feet.
Width: two and one-quarter inches.
Prong length: five inches.
(b) Length: three feet.
Width: three inches.
Prong length: ten inches.
(c) Length: five feet.
Width: three inches.
Prong length: sixteen inches.

(4) Plain Cylindrical Ranga

One variety of cylindrical ranga usually has at its two ends three or four carved flattened panels. The carving extends about six inches from each end. Ordinarily the pole is wrapped in feathered string and painted with geometrical designs indicating the species the emblem symbolizes. Such things as fire, iguana's tail, and woman are represented. When the last is formed, two wooden knobs are carved about eight inches from the top to represent the woman's breasts; at a distance of a foot from the bottom a one-and-one-half-inch hole is incised and lined with human hair and an inner layer of parrot feathers to represent the pubic hair and vagina; and a fringe of human hair is placed on the top of the pole. An incision running around the circumference of the pole is made below the knobs forming the breasts. It indicates the cicatrice cut or burned in the native women's chests below their breasts. [304]

All of the cylinder may or may not have streamers of red parrot feathers hanging from the wrapped fiber string. Sometimes human hair string is used instead of the fiber string.

Measurements:

Length: two feet four inches.
Width: two to seven inches.

A second variety of cylinder has one sharp prong extending from each end for a distance of about one-third the length of the object. The total length of this variety of ranga varies from two to four and one-half feet. The body part is entirely or partly wrapped with feathered fiber string and painted.

Type III. Stone Ranga.—Two varieties of stone ranga are found among these people, the first a pointed type and the second a flat oblong form. The former is usually a river-bed stone of the form and shape of an upper

778 532 grinding stone. The latter is a flat stone about five inches by one-half to one inch. Both are painted.

534 322 *Bull Roarers.*—Bull roarers are always made by older men. A flat slip of wood is first hacked out of a piece of eucalyptus into a rectangular shape. It is then whittled down into a thin sword-shaped instrument and given a smooth surface. If the bull roarer is not sufficiently straight to suit the maker, he heats it over a small fire, puts it into the fork of a tree and straightens it by applying pressure.

534 531 For decorating the bull roarer the wood is first given a covering of the juice from a macerated orchid bulb. Red ocher is then rubbed over the entire surface and a white clay snake design traced down each side. Often human blood is smeared over the snake design as an adhesive for white bush cotton or feathers. Sometimes the entire surface of the bull roarer is covered with feathers or cotton and the snake design traced with blood down each side of the instrument. A long rope of human hair is attached for the purpose of whirling the bull roarer about the user's head.

There are two types of bull roarers.

Type I. Mandel-prindi.—This is a flat, leaf-shaped instrument, slightly convex on both sides, with a hole in the narrower end for the insertion of two strands of hair string. The hair string is eight to ten feet long and is tied at the other end to a cylindrical handle twenty-six inches in length and two inches in diameter. The whole of the blade of the bull roarer is covered with red ocher or human blood, and painted. It also has birds' down on it.

534 The mandelprindi is whirled by the natives during the Gunabibi ceremony and is supposed to be the thunder which is the voice of the Great Snake totem.

Measurements:

Length: three-foot norm; variation six inches.

Width: three inches, widest part; one inch, narrowest part.

Type II. Paddle or Bird Type of Bull Roarer.—This form has the same shape as a paddle with a rounded end. It is slightly larger than the other bull roarer. It is looked upon as entirely different from mandelprindi, and its sound is supposed to be the voice of a bird. A hole is bored in the cylindrical handle to receive the end of the hair string.

Banitja.—These sacred sound-producing objects are long graduated strips of paper bark wrapped with pandanus fiber and covered with red ocher. They are used to beat the ground to warn and frighten women away from the ceremonial ground. They measure three feet by four inches by two inches.

534 531 *Yermerlindi.*—Two saplings are cut down and tied together. They are padded with grass and tied with fiber string. The front half of the surface thus produced is covered with paper bark and rewrapped with thick fiber string. The surface of the paper bark is covered with human blood and

765 [532] A foot below the "eyes" a band a half-inch wide is incised around the cylinder to represent the cicatrice on a native man's or woman's body.

The bones of the dead after exhumation are placed inside the coffin, a hole is dug a foot or so in the ground, and the log placed upright in the hole.

764 [531] *Grave Posts.*—A tree is felled and a log of the appropriate length cut from it. The post may be uncarved or a series of incisions may be made at the top of it to give it the appearance of a carved "head" with one or more necks.

The grave posts are placed over the grave of the dead, or they may be erected in the camp of a mourner to express his feeling of sorrow for the loss of his relation.

Measurements:

Length: adult, four to five feet; child, three and one-half feet.
Diameter: three to six inches.

765 [531] *Bark Coffin.*—The inner bark of a stringy-bark tree is soaked with water and heated over a fire, then formed into a cylinder with the inside of the bark turned out. It is stuffed with grass to keep it in shape and prevent it from splitting. The bones are placed in it and its two edges sewn together with pandanus fiber and a bone awl. The whole surface is covered with red ocher and painted with the totemic design of the deceased. The coffin is two feet long and four or five inches in diameter.

778 *Plank Ranga.*—Floating planks brought in on the tide, possibly from New Guinea, are of special totemic significance, and some of them are made into rangas by painting a design on them. The boards of a modern European box are now sometimes used in the same manner.

292 287 *Bark Belts.*—A strip of stringy bark about two inches in width, with a circumference great enough to reach about the body of a man, is soaked in water and held over a fire to make it pliable and to smooth its surface. It is then bent into its permanent shape and tied around the wearer. The ends are tied with fiber string and the belt is held in place by knotting the strings across the abdomen of the wearer. The belts are painted and used in ceremonies.

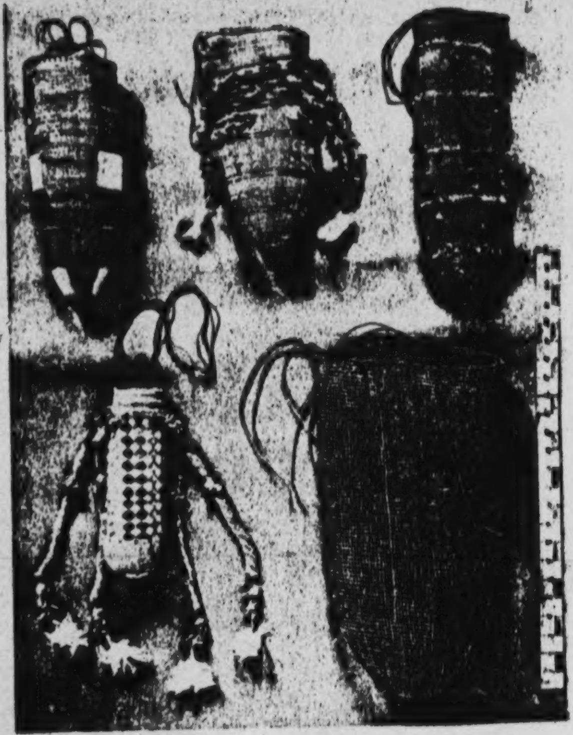
765 *Mourning Mast.*—The mast is supposed to represent the one used by the Malay in their sailing vessels when they visited southern Arafura waters.

[531] The mast is made from a long eucalyptus sapling and is about fourteen and a half feet high and three inches in diameter. The tree is barked first and then cut to leave a protruding oblong band around the circumference a third of the way from the top. The band is decorated with the totemic designs of the deceased. Fiber strings are tied to the top of the post and represent mast ropes.

796 *Barnumbir Stick.*—A stick about the length of a spear is cut with a diameter of three-quarters of an inch and is sharpened at one end. It is

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

[7 855.9]



IIIA. FOUR MEN'S BASKETS;
WOMAN'S CARRYING-BASKET (*lower left*).

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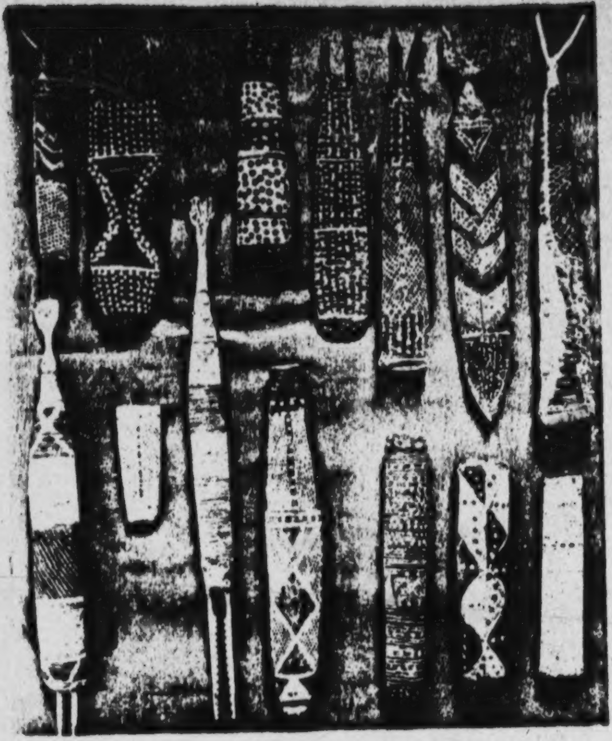

IIIB. TOTEMIC EMBLEMS USED IN NARRA CEREMONY.

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women. In my collections of bark paintings there is, fortunately, a series dealing with the *Djunkgao* myth, which is associated with localities extending from Port Bradshaw, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, to Goulburn Island on the north coast. These paintings show a gradual shift from male to female dominance as the myth moves westward. 773* 776 184

At Jelangbara, near Port Bradshaw, where *Djunkgao*[10] and his sister first landed, it was *Djunkgao* with his digging sticks who created most of the waterholes and topography, his sister being relatively unimportant. At Arnhem Bay[11] some thirty miles westward, although *Djunkgao* created the waterholes, he was under the dominance of his sister, *Madalait*. About fifty miles west of Arnhem Bay, and south of Elcho Island, is a sacred waterhole, Milmigarak, which was created by the *Djunkgao*, who by then had become two sisters, instead of brother and sister. Some elements of the *Wawalik* myth are incorporated in this one.[12] In the *Djunkgao* myths of the Milingimbi area, recorded by Warner,[13] the *Djunkgao* are two important female ancestors who named the animals, plants and birds, and created many sacred waterholes. [778]

As most of the bark paintings dealing with *Djunkgao* have separate myths, each painting will be described in association with the relevant myth.

Djunkgao and Madalait at Port Bradshaw

The myths associated with this collection of bark paintings, carved figures and ceremonial objects deal with both the arrival of *Djunkgao* and his sister *Madalait* at Port Bradshaw[14] and the origin of some of the totemic designs of the *rivedjingu* language (*mata*) group associated with the *Djunkgao* at Port Bradshaw. 773*

In early *bamun* (creation) times *Djunkgao*, his wife *Walo*, the sun-woman[15] their daughter, *Bara-bararinja* and *Madalait*, his sister, lived at Tjurinjina, a place far across the water to the east of Yirrkalla.[16]

One day *Djunkgao*, having decided to go on a journey to Port Bradshaw, set out in his bark canoe, taking his sister with him, but leaving his wife, the sun

[10] Myth, p. 273.

[11] Myth, p. 275.

[12] Myth, p. 275.

[13] Warner (1937), p. 336.

[14] The carved figures and ceremonial objects are described in Part 5.

[15] Berndt (1952), p. 3, states that the Djanggawul [*Djunkgao*] people were closely associated with the sun. One myth tells that the sun had two daughters who later became the *Djunkgao* sisters. In the myth of the sun, p. 502, which I collected in association with the relevant bark painting, Pl. 85E, the sun-woman, *Walo*, was the wife of *Djunkgao*. Their home was not at Purelko (Berndt's Bralku or Bralgu), but at Tjurinjina, some distance beyond.

[16] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 28, state that Djanggawul [Warner's and my *Djunkgao*], his two sisters, Maralaitj [my *Madalait*] and Pildjiwuraroiju, and a companion, Beralberal, came from Bralku [Warner's and my Purelko]. Later Berndt (1952), p. 2, corrects this statement and records that the party 'came from a far distant country, and on their way to the Arnhem Land mainland stopped at Bralgu [Purelko], the *dua* moiety island of the dead.' [114]

My aboriginal informants were definite that the *Djunkgao* party came, not from Purelko, the *dua* 'heaven', but from Tjurinjina which, although it lies in the same general direction as Purelko, is not the same place. This statement, and Berndt's later correction, are important because they dispose of the evidence that an important mythical ancestor originated in the home of the dead, evidence which might give rise to a theory that the aborigines of Yirrkalla believe in reincarnation. [775]

the aborigines either ran into the forest to hide themselves or climbed the trees 773* to get out of his way. But when the aboriginal men saw that *Banaitja* was making his camp on the Duluru-waltjalapa swamp, which was close to their territory, they decided to kill him. Waiting until *Banaitja* was asleep, the aborigines crept up and cast many spears into his body. Roaring with pain, *Banaitja* jumped into the swamp, calling out as he sank beneath the water:

'You'll never kill me properly. I'll come again before long.'

For many days *Banaitja* stayed on the bottom of the swamp, pulling the 773* spears from his body and waiting for his wounds to heal. Then one day he rose from the water, his body covered with painted designs and carrying in his right 532* hand a bundle of paper-bark[55] tightly bound with string, with which he started to beat the ground, the dull thudding sounds of which so frightened the aborigines that they all ran away.

Banaitja called to the adult men not to be afraid, for not only had he brought them many good things but he had much to tell them. After some hesitancy, the men gathered round to hear what he had to say. *Banaitja* first announced that he had changed his name to *Laitjun*. He then showed the members of each *mata* (language group) which designs they should paint both [302] on their bodies and their sacred objects during the times of ceremony, so that everyone would know to which *mata* group the others belonged. The designs they would use were those he had painted on his own body.[56]

As soon as each language group or *mata* had copied their own designs from his body, *Laitjun* transformed himself into a large white-barked eucalyptus tree which can still be seen on the shores of the Duluru-waltjalapa swamp of Blue Mud Bay.

As time went on the *jiritja* people became so contrite over the killing of *Banaitja* that they made a replica of his bark bundle, calling it by his name, *banaitja*. Each time the aborigines hear its dull thudding noise in the secret rituals they are reminded of their killing of the giant man and his gift to them.

Three bark paintings and a carved figure[57] belong to the myth of *Banaitja* or *Laitjun*.

Plate 88C: pictures *Banaitja*, his death and his transformation, first into *Laitjun*, then into the white-barked eucalyptus tree at Blue Mud Bay. In panel *a*, the aborigines of Blue Mud Bay are spearing *Banaitja*. He is carrying his spear-thrower, but has no designs painted on his body. The group of short lines

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[55] The aborigines of Yirrkalla used a similar paper-bark bundle during the non-secret totemic rituals of the circumcision ceremony which, they told me, was similar to that used in [778] the *Banaitja-Laitjun* ceremony. These bundles were identical with the *alukwina* (Pl. 104C) of the *amamaltja* ceremony of Groote Eylandt. Warner (1937), p. 302, mentions their use in the *duamarra* ceremonies.

Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 31, record that the aborigines, to commemorate *Banaitja*, 'made the "likeness" of Banaitja in paperbark, bound together on a framework of cane.' It would seem likely that the authors, having heard of the bark bundle, *banaitja*, gained a wrong impression of its appearance, and described it without having seen a specimen.

[56] See carved figure, Pl. 135A, B.

[57] This is figured and described on Pl. 135A, B.

THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

The Totemic Place, Jalboa, of the Thunder-man, Tjambuwal

About four miles north-west of Yirrkalla is a short headland, from the point 773*
of which a small reef extends into the sea. This headland, called Jalboa, is the 776
totem place of the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal* (Fig. 57). 133
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On its southern end the distorted rock strata of the cliff have formed into a number of more or less vertical irregular gutters which, according to the myth, are made when *Tjambuwal* urinates. On the point of the cliff about fifty yards to the north are the rocks which are shattered by *Tjambuwal* (Pl. 91E) when he strikes them with his club, *burunundu*, and on its slopes a number of white stones, *milarik* (Pl. 91F). It is these, or the spirits of them, which *Tjambuwal* throws into the sky to make thunder-clouds.[69]

On the adjacent beach are two small casuarina trees (Pl. 91A), once the bodies of *Tjambuwal* and his relatives. Not far from these casuarinas is a large fig tree (Pl. 91B), the transformed body of another of *Tjambuwal's* relatives. The fruit [778] of this fig tree is sacred, as indeed is the whole area at the base of the cliff. No one would dare to eat that fruit, for he would surely die, nor would he dig for ochre in the base of the cliff for, if he did, *Tjambuwal* would kill him. Should the women even look at the place where *Tjambuwal* urinated they must [783] atone for their misdeeds by a gift of food to the members of the thunder-man's totem. If not, *Tjambuwal* will make them ill.

The Thunder-man, Bolngo (or Tjambuwal) at Wulwulwi, Koolatong River

This version of the *Tjambuwal* myth places the totemic site at Wulwulwi, 773*
on the Koolatong River. The myth differs slightly in detail, but not in general 776
form, from that at Yirrkalla; *Tjambuwal* becomes *Bolngo*;[70] the looped clouds, 184
wulmu, become *djalijal*; and *Bolngo* urinates from a high tree,[71] instead of, as 532*
in the *Tjambuwal* myth, from the clouds.[72]

On the middle panel of Pl. 89B is *Bolngo* urinating on the ground beneath. This urine later rises into the sky and becomes rain. There is a line of hailstones, *milarik* (shown as ovals) to the right of *Bolngo*, and looped clouds, *djalijal*, above his head. The series of squares[73] on either side of *Bolngo* symbolize the open sea near Wulwulwi.

The Thunder-man, Tjambuwal, at Naitjulma, Arnhem Bay

When the thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*, was camped at Naitjulma, Arnhem Bay, 773*
two of his sons died and their bodies were transformed into white stones, called 776
milarik or *jurambai*. At the beginning of the wet season the thunder-man throws

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[69] See bark paintings of *Bolngo* Pl. 89B.

[70] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 11, refer to the thunder-man under the name of Bulugu.

[71] See myth of Bolngo and [illegible] pipe, p. 393. [72] See myth of *Tjambuluwal*, p. 282.

[73] This is the design belonging to the *dua tjapu mala* of Caledon Bay language group (Fig. 63A).

[text continues on p. 289]

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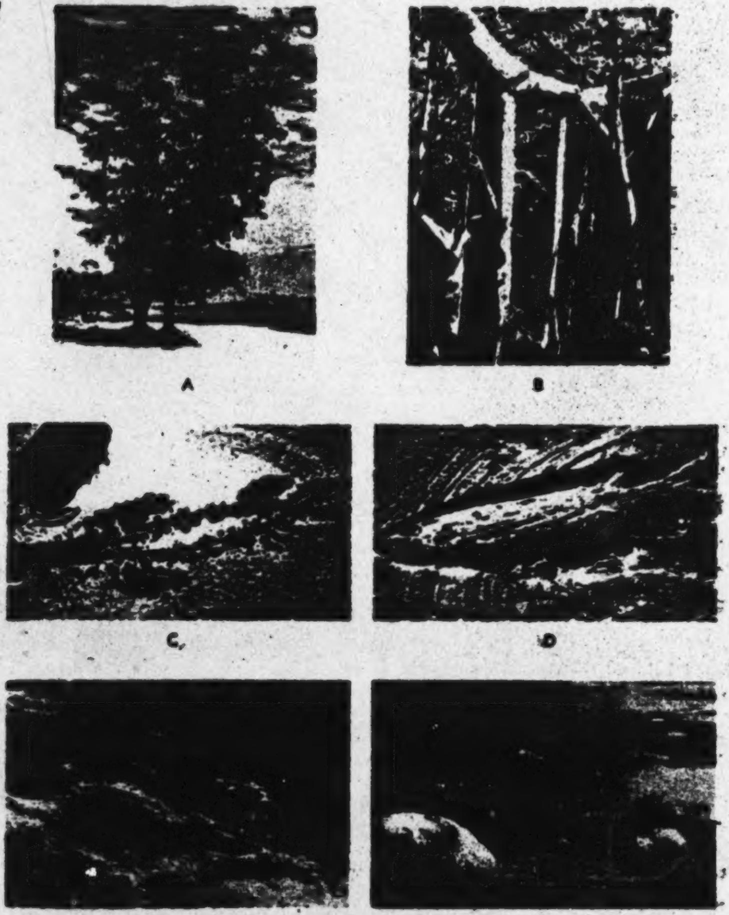
● 778



E PLATE 91. Totem places and sand figures, Yirrkalla F

A Casuarina tree, Jalbon
C Sand drawing, goanna
E Cliff at Jalbon

B Fig tree, Jalbon
D Sand figure, fish
F White stones, [illegible], Jalbon

*773 Four bark paintings and an engraved smoking pipe[81] deal with the myth of *Oijal* and *Neri-neri*.

*532 Plate 92A is the ancestor *Oijal*. He is carrying his stone-headed spear and spear-thrower in one hand, three boomerangs, *kunlili*, in the other, a spirit bag[82] round his neck and an opossum string pubic apron. The transverse bars across his chest and abdomen are body scars and the band round his neck, as well as the V-shaped line of dots on his chest, are painted body decorations.

In the bark painting, Pl. 92D, the story of *Oijal* and his sister in their caves at Melville Bay is illustrated in considerable detail. *Oijal*, the central figure, carries a boomerang in his left hand and two boomerangs, a stone-headed spear and a spear-thrower in his right. Groups of three boomerangs are shown to the left of his head and the right of his thigh. Another stone-headed spear is immediately to the left. The caves in which *Oijal* and his sister now live are indicated by two crescents, *b*, *b*, on the upper edge. The two designs, *a*, *a*, on the right and left-hand edge of the painting are totemic rocks near the caves. Hanging from the right-hand crescent, *b*, from the right arm of *Oijal* and in the extreme upper right at *d* are three of the baskets which *Oijal* and *Neri-neri* filled with honey. The four dotted semi-circular designs below, *a*, *a*, are the bark dishes in which the ancestors cooked their honey at Melville Bay. Wandarani River, near Melville Bay, made when the ancestors felled the tree, is represented by the zigzag cross-hatched lines at *e* on the lower edge. A similar design, *f*, upper left, is a tributary of Wandarani River. Cabbage palms, *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, grow near the caves of *Oijal*.

In Pl. 92B the panels *a*, *e* and *f* are the boomerangs belonging to *Oijal* and *b*, *h*, the foliage of some unidentified edible tuber, the tubers being shown on panels *c*, *d* and g. The dots on either side of the tubers are small stones on the ground. The central parallel vertical lines represent a track showing many wallaby footprints.

The upper part of this bark painting, Pl. 92C, deals with the man, *Oijal*, at Trial Bay and his day's catch of three snakes and eleven goannas. There is also a number of snake eggs in a basket made from the leaves of the cabbage palm (rectangle, lower right). *Oijal*, with his two hunting dogs, is on the upper left. The central cross-hatched transverse band is a stream at Trial Bay. On the bottom panel are the food-gathering efforts of his sister, *Neri-neri*. She is pictured on the right, digging stick in hand, a large carrying-basket over her shoulder and a small one round her neck. During the day she collected a number of edible yams.

An Aboriginal's Visit to the Land of the Malays

177
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This painting describes a visit of a *jiritja* man, *Amalatja*, to the land of the Malay trepangers, who, during last century, periodically visited the coast of

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[81] This is described elsewhere (Fig. 62B, p. 390).

[82] The spirit bag worn by the medicine man gives him greater power in healing or magic, because of the totemic spirits which live in it. See Warner (1937), p. 179; also p. 40.

● [778]

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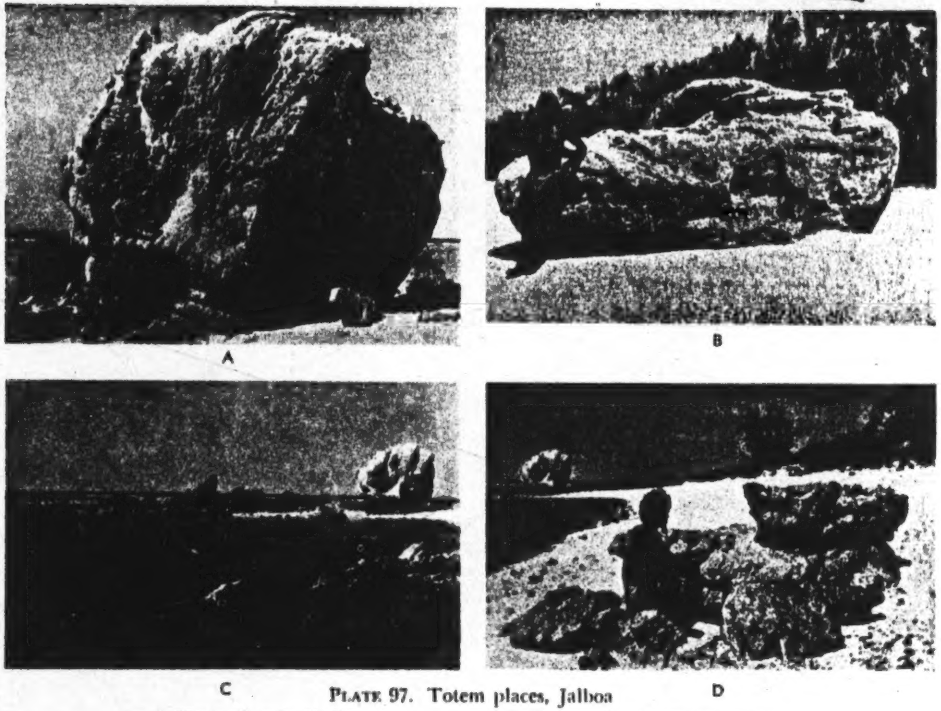

PLATE 97. Totem places, Jalboa

A The turtle rock, Ai-aika
B Totem rocks of turtle carapace
C Totem rock of canoe
D Totem rocks of dismembered turtle

532* 773*

After performing the dance of the tiger snake, *dunbania*, they each painted the death mark of the snake on their faces[3] and cast their spears at the sleeping [196] man. These passed through both his chest and carrying-bag, killing him instantly. 302]

The two brothers, waiting until the wives of *Djunmundia* returned from 628] food-gathering, captured them and, putting them aboard the canoe, paddled to an island north of Bremer Island. During the night, however, the women escaped, swam to the mainland, and told the *Bukalatji*,[4] relatives of the murdered *Djunmundia*, how their husband had been murdered. When the two brothers discovered their loss they returned to their camp on Bremer Island.

During the next few days the *Bukalatji* worked hard making a number of [501] bark canoes. Waiting until there was no moon, they launched them and paddled to Dambalia. Leaving their canoes to the north of the island, the *Bukalatji* crept through the low scrub to surround and kill *Tjuna-tjuna* and *Wururunga*. But the brothers heard them and, in their flight, came by chance on the bark canoes, [171] which they started to cut to pieces with the large steel knives which the Malays had given them. They had almost finished their work of destruction when the head man of the *Bukalatji* came up and begged them not to destroy his own canoe, so that he could take all of his people home. The brothers relented and allowed the *Bukalatji* to depart.

After some time the two brothers left Bremer Island and went to live near Cape Wilberforce, where they met and married two women from the nearby islands. The wives were out collecting oysters one day when the *Bukalatji* again attacked the brothers and this time succeeded in killing them. This so enraged the women that they attacked the *Bukalatji* with the knives belonging to their husbands and killed them all. [823] *Tjuna-tjuna* and *Wururunga* were then transformed into goannas and their camps on Bremer Island into trees. Between those trees there is a path, which must be kept clean by the local aborigines.

On Pl. 98A the two brothers, at *a*, are paddling their canoe to the mainland. On the left, at *b*, they are holding their spear-throwers and avenging spears in their hands. The elder brother, *Tjuna-tjuna*, is on the right. At *c* is their enemy, *Djunmundia*, transfixed by the two avenging spears, one of which has passed through both his chest and his carrying-bag (cross-hatched oval). In the lower right panel *d*, black circles enclosing the goannas are totemic trees mentioned in the myth; the parallel lines, the path between them; and the curves, nearby sand-hills.

The Man, Balonarati, and the Paper-bark Trees of Matamatani [778]

Between Trial and Caledon Bays is a river, Gainmaui. Near this river is the [133] Matamatani swamp,[5] about half a mile across and filled with paper-bark trees. [137]

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[3] The death mark, shown on the carved and painted head of *Banaramin*, Pl. 139D, E, is painted on the faces of all the men who take part in an avenging ceremony.

[4] These are the mythical people who killed *Muruma*, the fisherman. See Pl. 96D.

[5] This swamp is also mentioned in the myth of the three men and the bush-fire, Pl. 95B.

[text continues on p. 307]

532* 773*

dulwar. This is the totemic place of the mythical man *Balonarati* and the paper-bark trees.

[133 137 778]

During the early days of the world *Balonarati* invented the method of preparing *natu* from the fruit of the cycad[6] so that it would be fit for human consumption. *Balonarati* first broke the shells, pounded the kernels into flour, placed the flour in a finely-woven basket and soaked the food for three days in running water to remove the poison. At the end of that time he stripped sheets of paper-bark[7] from the adjacent trees and taking the sodden flour from the water, wrapped it in the paper-bark and allowed it to drain for several hours. After this treatment the flour was ready to eat. *Balonarati's* invention, still in use, ensures a plentiful food supply for the aborigines. The place where the mythical man prepared the cycad flour, *natu*, is now a swamp filled with large paper-bark trees, some of them still bearing the marks where *Balonarati* stripped the bark from them. 773* 532* 252

Two bark paintings, although somewhat similar in design, illustrate different aspects of the same myth. 773* 532*

On Pl. 98C,[8] the transverse bands *a* and *b* are sand-banks on the River Gainmaui, and *c* the main track between the north and the south of Caledon Bay. The lozenges are the paper-bark trees in the swamp, and the dots on the ends of the lozenges, fine white dust in the bark which the wild bees collect and carry to their hives. The cross-hatching indicates the pieces of bark lying about the base of the tree after the stripping is finished.

Plate 98B represents an individual tree at Matamataui. The lozenges on the upper and lower panels indicate places on the trunk from which *Balonarati* had stripped the bark, and the dots, like those on the previous painting, the white dust which the bees take to their hives. The cross-hatched bands surrounding the two panels indicate the upper part of the tree which the mythical man, being unable to reach, could not strip of its bark.

The Man, Rualko, and the Turtle, Muratu-muratu, at Cape Shield

The *jiritja* man *Rualko* lived, during mythical times, on the beach at Cape Shield. He ate only the eggs of turtles and sea-birds.

On Pl. 98D the central panel is the track of the female turtle, *muratu-muratu*, the herring-bone design being the marks she made in the sand as she crawled from the water to lay her eggs. The inner oval at *b* is the sand disturbed by the turtle in the preparation of her nest, and the dots in the outer oval her eggs. On his way to the turtle nest (see footmarks, panel *c*), *Rualko* collected the eggs (dots in panel *c*) which the four black seagulls had laid on the path. His returning footmarks are shown in panel *d*. The horizontal groups of wavy lines *e, e, e*, are the marks made in the sand by the sand-crabs, *gunjun*, and the semicircles

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[6] This fruit is poisonous if eaten in its raw state.

[7] Paper-bark, being particularly soft and flexible, is used for a wide variety of purposes. [314]

[8] Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

parallel sand-hills and the lizard walking on the soft sand, as they were seen and 764
'sung' by *Djunkgao* at Port Bradshaw.[30] On the lower left-hand panel the lines 532*
of cross-hatching symbolize the light on the crest of the breaking waves, seen by
Djunkgao as he landed on the beach at Bilapinja Island.[31]

The Green Turtle, Gariwa

Plate 102C, D pictures the coffin of a man belonging to the totem of the
mythical green turtle, *gariwa* (*Chelonia mydas*), whose totemic place is on the [823]
floor of the sea between Yirrkalla and Bremer Island.[32] On one side of the coffin, [778]
Pl. 102D, are two green turtles, *gariwa*, and on the other, Pl. 102C, in the left-hand panel, is a dolphin, and in the right an unidentified turtle, *jurnungi*. The cross-hatched band between them is the totemic rock at the bottom of the sea and the surrounding cross-hatching, the ocean.

The Water Totem, Kapu

These two coffins belonged to *dua* men of the *kapu*, water, totemic place near [778
Blue Mud Bay, where three fresh-water streams run into the Koolatong River.[33] 823]
One, Pl. 103C, appears to belong to the fresh-water side, and the other, Pl. 104B, to the salt-water side of the totemic locality.

The transverse bands encircling the coffin, Pl. 103C, are the three water-courses mentioned in the myth. The lower cross-hatched vertical panels represent the 'new' water, i.e. the fresh water which flows into the river after the heavy rains. The lines of dots on the upper section of the coffin are frog's eggs, the cross-hatched areas between; running water, and the short transverse lines at *a*, logs lying in the bed of the streams.

On Pl. 104B the lines of rectangles[34] represent the waters of the sea, and the groups of lines encircling the coffin, ridges of sand left by the receding tide.

The Brolga, Tungaldji

When the brolgas (*Grus rubicundus*) were men, during creation times, they 764
used to walk between the Meilinmurit waterholes in the extensive swamp country 773*
of Dimmujari, Blue Mud Bay. 532*

Later these men transformed themselves into brolgas, which still live in considerable numbers in that locality.

Plate 104D is the painted designs on a bark coffin belonging to a man of the *tungaldji*, brolga, totem. The circular designs are the Meilinmurit waterholes. Paper-bark trees, *mambara*, now grow in the swamps. The radiating paths are those made by the brolga men as they travelled from one waterhole to the other in search of food.

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[30] Bark painting, Pl. 86A; myth, p. 273.

[31] Bark painting, Pl. 65F; myth, p. 271.

[32] See carved figure of green turtle, Pl. 141A, B; myth, p. 417.

[33] Map, Fig. 57.

[34] This is the *mata* design of the *djapu* language group, Fig. 64A.

*773 *532 Plate 109E, panel *a*, shows a pregnant stingray which, during mythical times, went into the mangrove swamps to give birth to her young among the roots of the trees. Her body has become a mangrove creek at the totemic place. The ovals at the head of the stingray, places where the stingrays used to gather, are large sand-banks called Mourmourkuna. A mythical man, *Maididji*, panel *b*, is spearing stingrays among the roots of the mangrove trees (along upper edge). On either side of him are lines of falling rain created by the spray from the canoe. The transverse lines on both the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle are sand-banks at the totemic place.

Totem Creatures

● 778 825 In the centre of Port Bradshaw are *jiritja* totem places belonging to the turtle, the devil-ray, the trepang, the stingray, the octopus, the queen fish and the anchor of the *Baijini*.[83] The devil-ray swims round accompanied by his attendants, the octopi, and the trepang rests on the bottom. Should any aborigines inadvertently paddle their canoe over the totem places of either of these creatures, the trepang squirts up large quantities of water and the devil-ray creates huge waves which swamp the canoe and drown the occupants. The other totemic creatures are not dangerous to the aborigines of Port Bradshaw, although the turtle is dangerous elsewhere.[84]

Two paintings and two engraved paddles deal with these creatures.

778 825 *532 In the centre of the lower panel of the bark painting, Pl. 108C, is the hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, at Doria Island, near the entrance to Port Bradshaw, whose rocky cliffs are indicated by the cross-hatched triangles on either side of the turtle. The oval at *a* on the lower left is a trepang, *teripi* (*Holothuria* sp.). The devil-ray, *mulara*, is in the upper left with the octopi, *mainda*. In the upper right is a stingray, *barindjinou*, also accompanied by octopi. The designs *b*, *b*, *b*, are the ribs and planks of a wrecked *Baijini* boat, and *c*, *c*, a *Baijini* anchor, now a sand-bank.

Plate 110B also refers to the totemic creatures and places of Port Bradshaw. Reading from the top, in the right panel is a *Baijini* anchor, a trepang, *teripi*, a hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, and another trepang. The left panel is occupied by the devil-ray, *mulara*, and four queen fish, *tinimbu*.

The aborigines engraved three paddles, the designs of which dealt with the *jiritja* totem creatures of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw. Fig. 58A, B, pictures one of the paddles, C and D the second, and E and F the third.

The four upper bands, *a*, on E, are the open sea. Below, at *b*, and at *d*, are queen fish *tinimbu*. The central transverse band *c* is an arm of the sea, the triangles above being the wet-season clouds created by the devil-ray, *mulara*, and those below, rocks on the shore of Doria Island, the home of the devil-ray, whose body is now a large rock, panel *e*, below the surface of the water. The two rows of triangles in panel *f* are more wet-season clouds and the transverse bar between them, the lower dark-coloured edge of the clouds before they discharge their rain. Panel *g* is occupied by the *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*. 778 825 532*

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[83] See myth of the *Baijini*, p. 331.

[84] See myth of turtle, p. 117.

On the reverse side, K, *a* refers to the open sea, and the row of small triangles below, small clouds resting upon it; *tinimbu*, the queen fish, is in panel *b*. The devil-ray, *mulara*, is at *c*, also surrounded by cloud symbols. At *d* are more cloud symbols, and at *e*, another engraving of *mulara*.

The engravings on the obverse side of the companion paddle, C, deal with the devil-ray, *mulara*, and the turtle, *kouwaradji*, and on the reverse side, D, with the turtle only. On C, *mulara*, the devil-ray, is in panel *g*, surrounded by the clouds which he creates when anyone goes near his home in Port Bradshaw. The transverse bands, *f*, *h* and *m*, are rough seas made by him at the same time as the clouds. Near the head of *mulara* is a queen fish, *tinimbu*. At *j* is the hawksbill turtle surrounded by rocks, and at *n* and *k* are thunder-clouds which have discharged their rain.

On the reverse side, D, the cross-hatched bands, *a*, *c* and *f*, represent the rough seas made by the turtle, *kouwaradji*, when he is disturbed because the aborigines have approached his home. The triangles on panel *b* are the clouds, *tarul*, caused by the water the turtle blows into the sky, and the two triangles, *e*, the wind that originates in those clouds. The hawksbill turtle is at *d*, the triangles on either side of him being rocks near his totemic place.

Whilst on a canoe journey with the aborigines, I noticed that one of their paddles was covered with engraved designs. At the completion of the journey the aborigines traded this paddle, Fig. 58A, B, to me and explained the designs, all of them referring to the *jiritja* totemic creatures and natural features of Port Bradshaw.

Fig. 58A, B shows the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle. In panel *a* of A is the devil-ray, *mulara*, two hawksbill turtles, *kouwaradji*, and two queen fish, *tinimbu*. At *b* is a thunder-cloud created by *mulara*, and along the sides and above *b*, in the form of triangles, a number of smaller clouds.

The reverse side, B, shows panel *c* occupied by another thunder-cloud with smaller clouds, triangles, along its sides. The triangles in panel *d* indicate spent thunderstorms.

(b) CAPE ARNHEM

Mythical Human Beings

Bondo-bondo and his Wives at Cape Arnhem

A mythical *jiritja* man, *Bondo-bondo*, and his two wives, *Mambuno* and *Wurungil*, once lived at Kunbalbula, near Cape Arnhem. *Bondo-bondo* was an expert hunter of both the animals and the hives of wild bees. In the middle of a saline flat at the totem place of *Bondo-bondo* was a wooden penis. This was the penis of *Bondo-bondo*. Until recently, when anyone in the vicinity was going to search for the hives of wild bees, he first visited the wooden penis and, striking it with a branch, said: 773* 773* 222 798 [532*]

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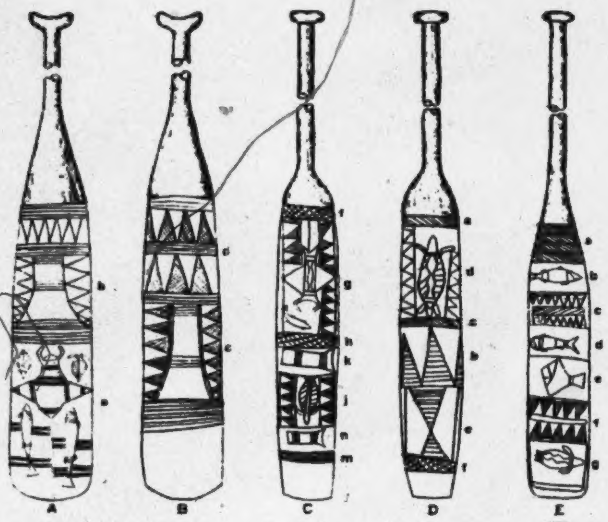

Fig. 58. Engraved paddles, Yirrkalla
Totemic creatures, Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw

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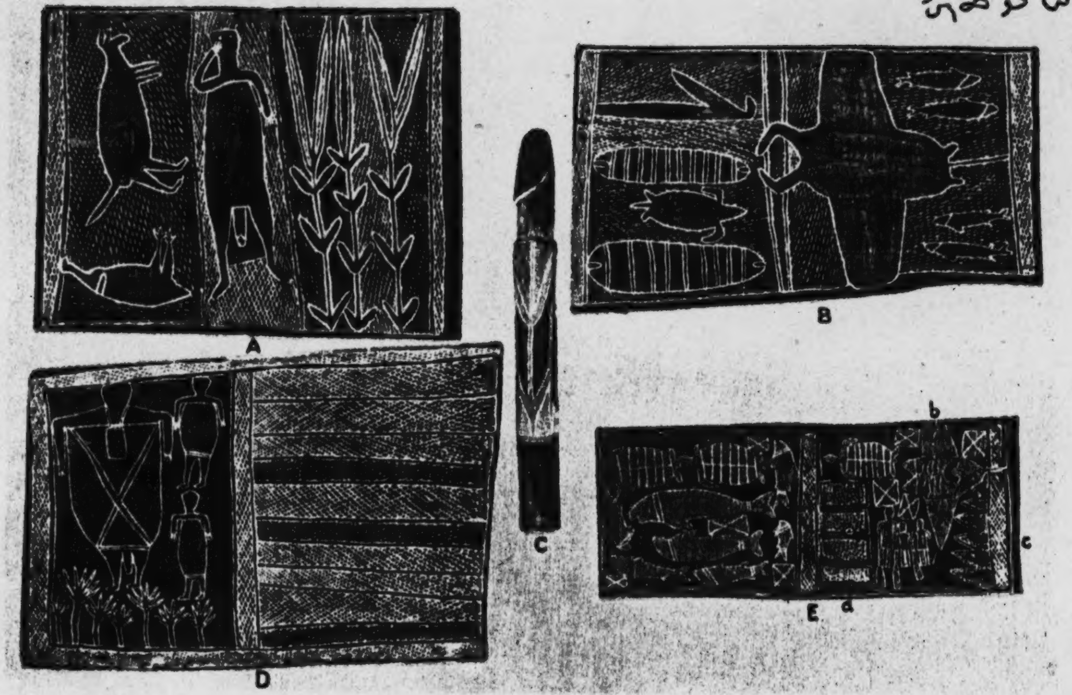

PLATE 110. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The man, Borolo-borolo B Totemic creatures, Cape Arnhem C The penis of Borolo-borolo
D Borolo-borolo and his wives E The Mokoi and the turtle hunt

that they can help the spirits of the newly dead on their journey to Nalkuma, 776
Wulu-wulu giving them the bean of the *menin* tree,[90] a passport into the *jiritja* 532*
heaven, and *Kultana* assisting to paddle them across the sea to their future 775
home.[91]

The Mokoi and the Turtle Hunt

Plate 110E is the story of a turtle hunt by some of the *Mokoi* who had paddled 773*
in a wooden canoe from Nalkuma to Cape Arnhem, and the incidents connected
with the hunt. 532*

The three *Mokoi* paddled through rough water (four cross-hatched rectangles, 776
a, on left of right-hand panel) to reach a group of rocks (squares with diagonal lines at *b*) so that they could spear the turtles living among those rocks. On their way the spirit-men saw a devil-ray, *b* (*Daemonata alfredi*).[92] The large gills are shown as slits, and the fat within the body as a crescent. In the left panel are dugongs, *merinjunga*, feeding on the submarine grass, *gumata*. The fish are *tinimbu*, queen fish, and squares with diagonal lines, rocks in the sea frequented by the turtles, upper edge.

The Mokoi and the Dugong, Merinjunga

Two mythical dugongs, *merinjunga* (*Dugong australis*), which once lived in the sea at Cape Arnhem were continuously being pursued by the *Mokoi* who came from the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. The *Mokoi*, however, were not always successful because, just as they were about to spear the creatures, a storm would
develop and allow the dugongs to escape.[93] Later the canoe was transformed
into a large rock on the sea coast between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, [823]
and the dugongs into a rock in the water near by. The place of the stingray, which also appears in the painting, is a hole in the ground. When travelling in their canoes the aborigines will not go near the totemic place of the dugong, for if they did the dugongs would send up so much smoke and fire that they would be destroyed.

On the land, near this totemic place, is a paper-bark tree, once a dugong, 778
which resembles that creature in appearance, and near by is a termite mound 789
also a transformed dugong. When the aborigines wish to increase the supply of
dugongs at a particular locality they take a branch from the dugong tree and a 825
piece of earth from the termite mound and throw them both into the fire. When the wood is burnt to ash the men take the heated termite earth from the fire, pound it into dust, mix it with the wood ash and throw the mixture into the sea where the dugongs feed. This dust from the totemic tree and the termite mound will create many dugongs in that locality.[94]

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[90] Pl. 100C.
[91] Myth, p. 331.
[92] This huge, cumbersome but harmless sea-creature sometimes reaches a length of fifteen feet and a weight of a ton. [136]
[93] Dugongs can only be captured on windless days when the sea is calm. [225]
[94] This increase ritual is not unlike that carried out at the increase centre for parrot-fish at Winchelsea Island, p. 84. [171]

776 clouds to form, shown on panel *b*, and rain to fall. In panel *c* are two more
*773 queen fish. The rectangular design in the centre of the left-hand panel is an
*532 unidentified place, called Waitjundudu, situated under the water near Cape
Arnhem. Near by are two queen fish, three turtles and seven octopi.

The Journey of the Mokoi, Birikiri, to Cape Arnhem

There was once a spirit man (*Mokoi*) called *Birikiri*, who left Nalkuma to
● [778] capture some dugongs and paddled to the totem place of the *Mokoi* on the
southern side of Cape Arnhem. On his arrival *Birikiri* felt tired, so he pulled his canoe up on the beach, lay down on the warm sand and went to sleep. When he awoke he saw, to his dismay, a mortal man, an aboriginal called *Junbulu*, coming toward him. He rushed to his canoe but in his fright became so confused that he had great difficulty in launching it. Finally he succeeded and, paddling through the rough breakers, reached Nalkuma in safety.

Figure 58F, G illustrates both the obverse and reverse sides of the engraved paddle.

In panel *b* of F is *Birikiri* who, having just arrived from Nalkuma, has pulled his canoe up on the beach, the cross-hatched panel below. Above the canoe is *Birikiri* asleep on the sand, the sand being indicated by the long rectangle beneath him. There are six octopi, called *kwidilir*, in panel *a*. Cross-hatched transverse panels, *c*, *d*, *e*, and the area *o*, represent the stormy water through which *Birikiri* paddled his canoe to escape from *Junbulu*. At *r*, the triangular designs are clouds left in the sky by the *Mokoi*.

The reverse side of the paddle, G, deals with some of the totemic creatures associated with Cape Arnhem, all of which have become natural features. In the centre of panel *d* is a devil-ray with octopi on either side. There is a queen
fish above and below. The hump-backed whale, *morokundja*, is in panel *e*,
[825] surrounded by four octopi. These octopi are the friends of both the whale and
the devil-ray. Transverse panels *a*, *b* and *c* refer to the stormy seas through which the *Mokoi* paddled and the short lines around the border of the paddle, reefs some distance from the shore.

Totem Creatures

*773 Three bark paintings and three decorated paddles illustrate one or more of
778 the totem creatures of Cape Arnhem.

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The Totemic Creatures at Marawina, near Cape Arnhem

The upper cross-hatched panel of Pl. 106B[98] is the open sea. Below, at *a*, is the devil-ray, *mulara*, and his friends, the octopi, *mainda*. At *b* is the constellation of Tjirilpan, Orion and the Pleiades,[99] with a rock cod, *kouper*, on each side of the constellation. In panels *c* and *d* are six clouds. Rain is falling from the two clouds on the right. In the bottom left-hand panel, *e*, is a crocodile,

[98] Interpretation by F. M. Setzler.

[99] See astronomy, Pl. 157D.

baron, a stingray, *kawangalk-miri*, two hawksbill turtles, *kouwaradji*, and the turtle rocks shown in Pl. 110E. In panel *f* there are two stingrays. 773* 778 825 532*

The Queen Fish, Tinimbu, the Turtle, Kouwaradji, and the Octopus, Mainda

The upper panel of Pl. 106C contains four octopi, *mainda*, and a turtle, *kouwaradji*, and in the bottom panel three queen fish, *tinimbu*, and a number of octopi. The figure at the lower left, to which two octopi have attached themselves, and on which one of the queen fish is resting, is an unidentified totemic rock on the bottom of the sea between Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem.*

The Whales, Welerria and Morokundja, and the Stingray, Kawangalk-miri, at Cape Arnhem

In the early days, two mythical whales[1] lived in large caves at the bottom of the sea at Cape Arnhem. The male was called *welerria*, and the female *morokundja*. They had as a companion a stingray, *kawangalk-miri*. At the close of the creation period the whales and the stingray went into the sky and are now portions of the Milky Way near the constellation of Orion. [821]

The first figure to the left of Pl. 106D is the female whale, *morokundja*, the next is the male, *welerria*, and the third the stingray, *kawangalk-miri*. The two dark-coloured rectangles, *a* and *b*, at the upper right and left, are caves at the bottom of the sea where the whales once lived. The white cross-hatching is sea-water and the darker-coloured cross-hatched panels, water which was clouded by the stingray when it was feeding along the bottom. The parallel lines above the heads of the whales symbolize the water parting as they swam and the white triangle on their heads, their blow-hole.

Totem Place of the Devil-ray, Mulara, and the Whale, Morokundja, at Nantjaka, Cape Arnhem

On the upper left of Pl. 108B is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by panels of triangular designs representing clouds. On the upper right is a whale, *morokundja* (most likely *Megaptera australis*).[2] The cross-hatching surrounding the whale indicates the disturbance it creates as it swims through the water.

On the left, at *a*, are two oval rocks, the haunts of the hawksbill turtles and sailfish, *kunderunga*, shown to the right of the rocks.

The three triangular designs, *a*, and the three anvil shapes, *b*, above them are clouds. Reading from *c* at the right edge, the subjects of the panels are: sea-water, a panel of clouds, a line of octopi, sea-water and another line of octopi. Nantjaka, at Cape Arnhem, is the totem place for all the creatures represented in the painting. Interpretation by F. M. Setzler. [823]

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*Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXVI.

[1] Warner (1937), p. 305, describes the totemic dance of the whale in the *jiritja narra* ceremonies of the Murngin tribe.

[2] This whale later went into the sky and became part of the Milky Way near the constellation of Orion. Pl. 157D. [82.1]

The Hawksbill Turtle, Kouwaradji

*773 A giant *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, called *kouwaradji*, lives at Talaoi, a totemic
● 778 place at the bottom of the sea, but close to the shore of southern Cape Arnhem.
825 This turtle is greatly feared and in general his camp is strictly avoided. Should,
however, an aboriginal unwittingly paddle his canoe over *kouwaradji's* camp, the
*532 turtle becomes annoyed and either creates waves so large that they upset the
canoe and drown the occupant, or blows water into the sky to create heavy
[821] thunderstorms, so that they will destroy the intruder.

Kouwaradji, however, does not always drown the offenders. Sometimes he takes them under the water for a time and then allows them to come to the surface again. Although this experience makes the aborigines 'silly' for some weeks, they finally recover.

In the centre of the painted paddle, Pl. 109A, at *a*, is Talaoi, the camp of the hawksbill turtle. The black triangles are flat rocks at the totemic place, and the light-coloured triangles, coral rocks. Above and below at *b*, *b*, is the hawksbill turtle. The groups of triangular designs at the top and bottom of the paddle blade are the thunder-clouds created by the turtle when he becomes annoyed.

The Dugong, Merinjunga

When the dugong, *merinjunga*, is disturbed by the aborigines paddling a
canoe over his camp at Nangata (at the bottom of the sea, between Cape Arnhem
[821] and Port Bradshaw) he becomes annoyed and blows up so much smoke and fire
that it destroys the intruders and causes heavy rainstorms to fall. As soon as this
happens, the stingrays travel into the mangrove swamps to give birth to their
young.[3]

Plate 109B shows the painted paddle, both sides of which are decorated similarly. The design in panel *a* is a large rain cloud created by the dugong, and the triangles on either side, smaller clouds. The dark-coloured triangle in panel *b* is a thunderstorm and the cross-hatching on either side, the rain falling from it. Similar cross-hatching in panel *c* also indicates the falling rain, which causes the stingray, centre, to go to the mangrove swamps.

The Devil-ray, Mulara, and the Hawksbill Turtle, Kouwaradji

Plate 109C, D pictures the obverse and reverse sides of the painted paddle. On panel *a* of C is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by octopi, *kundilir*. In the two panels, *b*, are queen fish, *tinimbu*, and above them again, at *c*, the clouds made by the devil-ray, *mulara*, when he becomes annoyed. The cross-hatched panels on either side are flat rocks at his totemic place near Cape Arnhem and the transverse cross-hatched panels, *f*, *f*, *f*, the waves breaking over those rocks. At *d* is the hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, accompanied by his attendants, the octopi, *mainda*.

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[3] This myth is similar in this respect to that of the dugong and the mythical men, p. 315.

On the reverse side, *a* is the devil-ray, *mulara*, surrounded by octopi. At the 773* top of the same panel are two queen fish. At *b* are two *jiritja* stingrays, *dulamou*, 778 the cross-hatched panels surrounding them representing the sand-banks near 825 their totemic place. There is a wet-season cloud, *barawal*, at *c*, created by the 532* serpents, *bilumbira*, and at *d* the same clouds when the rain is falling.

The bottom of all *jiritja* paddles are similar in shape to this example. For the shape of the *dua* paddle, see Fig. 58A, B.

On this paddle, 58H, J, are engravings of the devil-ray, queen fish, crocodile, stone fish and the serpents, *bilumbira*.

On J, *a* is the devil-ray, the triangles at its tail picturing broken cumulus clouds after they have shed their rain. At *e* is the queen fish, *tinimbu*, and at *f* a wet-season cumulus cloud with rain falling from its lower edge. This cloud was created by the serpent, *bilumbira*, who can be seen travelling in it. The triangles on either side are small broken cumulus clouds. At *g* is a crocodile, *barou*, and a stone fish, *kaunbiriunja*. The transverse panels, *b*, *c*, *d*, picture rough seas, and the short lines surrounding the whole design, reefs in the sea at Cape Arnhem.

The designs on H refer to the *bilumbira* serpents hanging from the branches of the *menin* trees at Cape Arnhem after having caused the wet-season thunderstorms to form.[4] In panel *a* are two *bilumbira*, shown upside down, hanging from the branches of a *menin* tree. The male is on the left. The triangles at *b* are small clouds also created by the serpents. The queen fish, *tinimbu*, in panel *c*, is associated in some unidentified way with the northerly wind, *lunguruma*,[5] indicated by the parallel lines on either side of the fish. When the *lunguruma* wind is blowing there is a plentiful food supply.

The Serpent, Bilumbira

The serpents, *bilumbira*, are highly coloured, dangerous creatures, with long projecting teeth. They are reputed to be over fifty feet in length. During the dry season the *bilumbira* live in a group of submerged rocks, called Daliwa, on the sea floor between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw. Should anyone paddle near by, the *bilumbira* will rise to the surface and with their long teeth destroy the canoe and its occupants. Another *bilumbira* totemic place is on the north side of Cape Arnhem.

When the wet season starts, the *bilumbira* leave their home at the bottom of 821 the sea and make the large thunder-clouds, in which they travel. The aborigines believe that the thunder is their voice and the lightning their tongues. The aborigines claim that during the wet season there are always thunder-clouds over the home of the *bilumbira* at Cape Arnhem.

Plate 112D shows a serpent travelling in a thunderstorm. On either side are young thunderstorms 'growing up', to use an aboriginal term. At the base of the 'young' thunderstorms, at *a* and *b*, the cross-hatching indicates falling rain.

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[4] See Pl. 112C.

[5] See Yirrkalla winds, p. 133.

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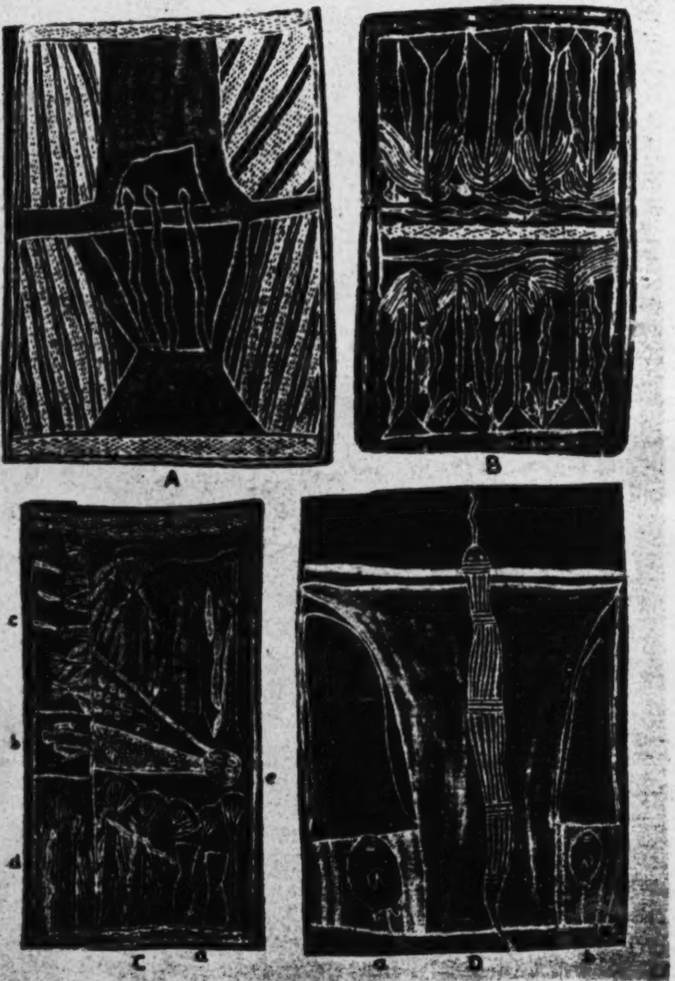
A
B
c
b
e
d
C
a
a
D
b

PLATE 112. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla
The serpent, bilumbira

The two stingrays, shown in the centre of the rain, are travelling to the mangrove swamps to give birth to their young.[6] 773*

Plate 112A is another painting illustrating the myth of the *bilumbira*. The 778
main features above and below the central line are two large thunderstorms in 825
which three serpents are travelling. The parallel lines of cross-hatching in the 532*
four corners of the painting depict the falling rain.

Plate 112B deals with the totemic place of the *bilumbira* on the northern side of Cape Arnhem. In the lower panel are *menin* trees, and at their base four jungle-fowls (*Megapodius reinwardt*) scratching up their mounds.[7] Hanging from the branches or flying through the air are a number of the *bilumbira* serpents. The human figures are *Mokoi*.[8]

The upper panel shows similar trees with jungle-fowl mounds at their base, and birds, presumably jungle-fowls, in the branches. As in the upper panel, there are serpents flying through the air or hanging from the branches.

Plate 112C is an elaboration of the previous painting, the upper and lower right-hand panels referring to the same trees and serpents as those shown on B. In the lower right, at *a*, the two square-topped designs with the serpent entering from the left indicate the submerged rocks at Daliwa, the dry-season home of the *bilumbira*. The upper and lower left-hand panels, *c* and *d*, show additional trees with mounds at their base and, presumably, jungle-fowls in their branches. On the centre left at *b* is a *Mokoi*. The triangular section in the centre of the right-hand side of the painting refers to the swamp lands on the coast adjacent to the totemic place of the *bilumbira*. In the lower section of the triangle are unidentified birds and in the upper section, a *Mokoi* lying down, and near by a group of circles representing some unidentified fruit. More fruits are shown in the circle at *e*.

(3) ANIMALS AND BIRDS

The Hawk-man, Wabula, and the Butterfly-girl, Bounba

The hawk-man, *Wabula*,[9] was without a wife. One day when he was feeling 773*
particularly lonely he came across a camp of butterfly-people, *Bounba*,[10] sitting 825
under the trees. *Wabula* was attracted by the eldest sister, resting in a special hut on one side, and made plans to capture her for his wife. Going to a nearby beach, he caught a number of lobsters, called *maitka*, cooked them and, wrapping some of them in paper-bark, returned to the camp of the butterfly-people, and offered them to the eldest sister. As she came forward to take the food

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[6] Myth, p. 340.

[7] The jungle-fowls, by their calls, attract the *jirtja* spirits of the dead to a forest near Port Bradshaw; from there, the spirits set out on their journey to the *jirtja* heaven. Myth, p. 229. [775]

[8] These spirit people, *Mokoi*, have a totemic place on the southern side of Cape Arnhem.

[9] In another myth the hawk, *wabula*, is associated with the native cat. See p. 357.

[10] According to Warner (1937), p. 424, the butterfly, *burn-ba*, is closely associated with the morning star, *barnumbir*, and lives on the top of it. [821 825]

bottom edge is his wife, *Borok*, urinating in the sea. Beside her is the cockroach 773*
into which she later transformed herself. On the upper right the leaf-shaped 532*
design symbolizes Meleton Island in Melville Bay, where the wallaby made its
home. The oval near the right knee of the wallaby-man, *Moutia*, is a totemic 823
rock associated both with him and his wife. 778

The Native-cat man, Baracuma, and the Hawk-man, Wabula

In the early days of the creation period, a native-cat man, *Baracuma*, who 773*
lived near Blue Mud Bay, owned the only fishing net in the world. It was so good that, whenever he cast the net into a nearby stream, he caught, in a short time, all the fish that he required.

One afternoon he decided that, instead of fishing in the river, he would go to a nearby lagoon. Again he caught many fish, and had just spread them out on green leaves, preparatory to cooking them, when his friend, *Wabula*, the hawk-man, paid him a visit. On seeing so many fish, and hearing about the excellence of the net, the hawk-man asked *Baracuma* to lend it to him. But *Baracuma* demurred, explaining that his life was so intimately associated with the net that it it were out of his hands for any length of time he would die. *Wabula*, however, assured *Baracuma* that he ran no risk whatever, because even if he, *Wabula*, were unsuccessful in his fishing, he would bring the net back in time. The native-cat man, *Baracuma*, persuaded against his will, allowed the hawk-man to take his net away.

But the fish were so numerous that *Wabula*, not realizing the truth of the story about the intimate association between *Baracuma* and his net, continued to use it, even though he could hear the distressed *Baracuma* calling out. When at last *Wabula* returned the net to its owner he was, from all appearances, dead. When *Wabula* threw the fishing net over the native-cat man, however, its contact gave him strength, and he slowly revived.

After that distressing experience the native-cat man refused to lend his net to anyone, even though *Wabula*, in particular, pestered him day after day, always promising to return it quickly. One day *Baracuma*, sorry because *Wabula* was hungry, lent him the net, but impressed upon him the urgent need for its speedy return. Remembering that his thoughtlessness had almost killed his friend, the hawk-man returned the net quickly. After that *Wabula* kept his contract so well that *Baracuma* gradually lost his fear of lending it.

Then one day, when the fishing was not good and *Wabula* was hungry, he continued in pursuit of a particularly large fish, even though he knew he was exposing his friend *Baracuma* to great danger. But when, on capturing the fish, *Wabula* returned the net he found that his greediness had killed the native-cat man, for on that occasion not even winding the net round *Baracuma's* body would bring him back to life. A kangaroo-man, who had seen the whole incident, transformed the dead *Baracuma* into the native-cat and *Wabula* into a hawk.

The Fresh-water Goanna, Bijr, and Yellow Ochre

At Gurunga, Caledon Bay, the mythical fresh-water goannas, *bijr*, when 773*
digging out their nesting burrows, discovered both black and yellow ochres. 825
During creation times a *jiritja* mythical man, *Wirili*, also excavated the ochres 532*
with a digging stick. When the men of the *jiritja* moiety go to Gurunga to collect
these ochres they must approach the totemic place by crawling along the ground [317
and, while digging out the ochre, use only a special ceremonial stick, called [778]
kainina. 481]

On Pl. 118A the vertical lines of lozenge-like designs[29] symbolize the yellow ochre at Gurunga. At *a*, and *b*, in the lower panel, are two digging sticks, *kainina*, which in mythical times were used only by the man *Wirili* and today only by the men of the *jiritja* moiety when digging for ochre. *Wirili's* tracks are shown at *c*, on the lower right. In the next panel, *d*, is a large tree, *gŭnja*, in whose branches a night-bird, *karwak*,[30] is eating the fruit of the tree. Beside the trunk of the tree is the fresh-water goanna, *bijr*, which once dug for ochre in the same place as the man, *Wirili*. The central cross-hatched band, *e*, is a hole in the cliff where *Wirili* was unsuccessful in his search for ochre.

Plate 118C shows the goanna, *bijr*, at the bottom of the painting. Above and on either side of the reptile the designs represent the black and yellow ochres. The two ceremonial digging sticks are shown on the extreme right and extreme left of the lower panel.

Plate 118D pictures six mythical fresh-water goannas, *bijr*, which lived at Gurunga, Caledon Bay.

Plate 118B is a bark painting from Milingimbi which depicts ten fresh-water goannas, *bijr*, at Gurunga. This painting is included to show the stability of this totemic design over a wide area.

The Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimala, at Kulwitji Lagoon, Koolatong River

The *jiritja* mythical fresh-water tortoise, *mimala*, has a number of totemic [778]
places in north-eastern Arnhem Land. One myth, engraved on a smoking pipe,
Fig. 59D, deals with *mimala* at Calabailai, south of Milingimbi. Others deal with a painted coffin, Pl. 105B (*mimala* at Milingimbi); a painted bull-roarer, Pl. 144A, B (*mimala* at Diawirinja, west of Arnhem Bay); a Milingimbi bark painting, Pl. 126A (*mimala* at Jaraga, a forest area near Arnhem Bay), and the subject of this painting from the Kulwitji lagoon on the Koolatong River. The most complete myth is that associated with the engraved pipe, p. 391.

This painting, Pl. 119A, deals with the totemic lagoon of *mimala* at Kulwitji. In panel *a* is the fresh-water tortoise, the meandering lines at its tail being the wake it creates when swimming. The diamonds and dots occupying the rest of the panel are the bubbles rising to the surface of the water as the tortoise feeds

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[29] This is one of the designs of the *gumaitj mata*, Fig. 61M.
[30] Myth of *karwak*, the night-bird, and the opossum, p. 392.

532 lower section is the open sea, as viewed from above. The dark cross-hatched areas indicate the sandy sea bottom, and the light-coloured areas the sea. The creatures are stingrays, the crescent-shaped marks on their bodies being masses of fat which [262] the aborigines value as food.

Trial Bay

●778 *532 Plate 120D pictures the surroundings at a *dua* totemic spot near Trial Bay. At *a* on the lower right-hand panel are two green turtles, *gariwa*, and the sea-urchins (circles), on which they feed. The top turtle has a black seagull resting on its back and the one below, a white bird.[49] The next panel, *b*, shows rocks, Marin, which project above the water at Trial Bay. The vertical cross-hatched band to the left represents the waves beating against the rocks, and the black panel, *f*, another totemic rock, Nangi, the panels of chevron designs on either side of *f* symbolizing the rays of the sun. In the extreme left panel *e* are bone fish, *warawanda*, and a row of sea-urchins.

The Milungwira Swamps and the Men, Laitjun and Bourngauwili

*773 *532 825 The Milungwira swamp, situated north of Blue Mud Bay at the mouth of the River Girituwi, is an important totemic place in the *jiritja* mythology. It is associated with the mythical man *Laitjun*,[50] another man, *Bourngauwili*, a dingo, *dulairuju*, a water-snake, *gamarana*, and a rat, *nik-nik*.[51]

Four bark paintings are associated with Milungwira and its totemic inhabitants.

Plate 121B pictures the Milungwira swamp and the man, *Bourngauwili*, who with his dog, *dulairuju*, had set out to hunt the rat, *nik-nik*, and yellow water-snake, *gamarana*. In the lower left panel *a* is the dog, *dulairuju*, and in the upper right panel *c* the rat, *nik-nik*, swimming through a swamp covered with the leaves of water-lilies, *jouku*. The meandering lines behind *nik-nik* indicate where it has pushed the lily leaves aside. The upper left and lower right-hand panels *b* and *d* [262] illustrate those parts of the swamp which are covered with water-lily leaves. The bulbs of the lilies are an important aboriginal food. The eight small circles, *e*, *e*, on the outer edge of the design are subsidiary swamps, Mailuju, where small bamboos, used by the aborigines for spear shafts, grow in abundance. The circle in the centre of the painting is the dry-season home of the yellow water-snake, *gamarana*, which no aboriginal will go near. During the wet season these snakes [821] leave their waterhole, go into the sky and create the rain, the thunderstorms and the lightning.[52] The four birds are herons, *balir*; the tracks on the right-hand

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* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XXII.

[49] It is not an unusual sight in the Gulf of Carpentaria to see a bird resting on the back of a basking turtle. The resting bird indicates to the aborigines that the turtle is on the surface.

[50] See myth of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun*, p. 279.

[51] *Nik-nik* was the 'dog' of the woman, *Mahrulwi*. See carved figure, Pl. 133D, and myth, p. 131.

[52] This appears to be a parallel myth to that of the *bilumbira* of Cape Arnhem, p. 351.

(8) THE ART OF MILINGIMBI

The Rev. Arthur F. Ellemor made a small collection of Milingimbi bark paintings for the expedition, together with simple but incomplete interpretations. This collection was valuable because it shows that the art of Milingimbi, on the west of north-eastern Arnhem Land, and that of Yirrkalla on the east, are similar both in design and mythological content. 532* 104 [114]

778* 532*

The Wild Honey, Koko

The honey of the stingless bee is one of the few sweet foods in the aborigines' menu. Many hours are spent searching for this food and a great deal of labour expended climbing the trees and cutting out the hives. Four bark paintings[66] were collected dealing with the mythical wild-honey ancestors of Milingimbi. 222 [262 481]

Plate 125C is associated with a mythical wild-honey woman, called *Birikura*, whose camp was on the mainland south of Elcho Island. This site is a totemic place of the wild honey, *koko*. The painting is a conventionalized representation of a hive of wild bees, the projection from the upper edge being the 'nose' or entrance to the hive, and the central disc, the beeswax. The cross-hatched diamond-shaped patterns covering the bulk of the painting represent the honey comb, the white lines forming the margins of the various cells, the beeswax, and the dotted diamonds the eggs and young bees in the nursery cells.

Plate 125A is another painting of a hive of wild honey. The symbolism is similar to that in C, except that the artist has shown four entrances to the hive.

Plate 125D pictures *koko's* totemic place at Murnarambul, near Arnhem Bay. The three transverse panels, *a, a, a*, and the vertical cross-hatched one, *b*, refer to logs lying on the ground near Murnarambul, in which there are hives of wild bees. Within the design made by these four logs are hives of wild bees. These hives are pictured with the same symbols as those in A and C, the two long triangular projections at the top of the painting being entrances to the hive.

Plate 125B is another painting of a hive of wild bees, using the traditional symbolism to show the wax, honey, eggs and young bees. The long rectangular design in the middle of the bark painting is a hollow tree in which there is a hive of bees, the honey and comb. The hive is again shown at the bottom of the central panel. The entrance or nose of the hive is a long tapering design at the top. The side panels illustrate two more hives.

Mimala, the Fresh-water Tortoise

Plate 126A pictures a forest area near Arnhem Bay, called Jaraga, the totem place of the mythical fresh-water tortoise, *mimala*.[67] Three of these tortoises are shown at the top of the painting, the designs on each carapace representing the water-grass often growing on the backs of these creatures. The three dark-coloured vertical lines, *a, a, a*, are logs and the four panels of diamond-shaped 532* [778] patterns, the comb of a hive of wild bees, associated in some undefined way with the tortoises. 532*

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[66] These designs are similar to those of the *dalwongu mata*, Fig. 61J.

[67] *Mimala*, the fresh-water tortoise, is also pictured on an engraved smoking pipe, Fig. 80D; on a painted coffin, Pl. 105B; and on another bark painting, Pl. 119A.

Fish and Eggs

Plate 126B refers to the spawn and developing young of an unidentified fish which lives in the swamps south of Milingimbi. The dotted lines symbolize the developing fish, and the sloping lines between, the spawn.

The Kangaroo-man, Gardjambal

Plate 126C belongs to Nulwadjbir, situated on the southern end of Buckingham Bay, the totemic place of the kangaroo-man, *Gardjambal*, who is shown seven times in this painting. The design at the bottom of the right-hand panel is the stone axe of the kangaroo-man; the remaining ovals are his tracks. 773* 532* [778 ● 823]

The Serpent-men, Jurlungur and Gadjalan

Plate 126D pictures the two serpent-men, *Jurlungur* (upside down) and *Gadjalan*, creators of the country of Mirrirmina.[68] Each mythical man is wearing a tall feather head-dress. To the right of both *Jurlungur* and *Gadjalan* are their spear-throwers, spears and wooden trumpets.

The Two Sisters, Miwal and Wanu-wanu

Plate 127A pictures two mythical women, *Miwal* and *Wanu-wanu*,[69] in their bark hut at Djimba, a place in a jungle near the Gardji swamp. This swamp is on the mainland south of Milingimbi. The long panel in the middle of the bark painting is the central pole supporting the bark hut. Within this pole there is a hive of wild bees, the dots representing the bees and the honeycomb. The two women, *Miwal* and *Wanu-wanu*, with their hands upraised, are at the top of the painting. The remaining designs were not explained.

Unidentified Totem, Galdar

Plate 127B pictures a totemic place, Budjala, in eastern Arnhem Bay, which belongs to an unidentified totemic creature, called *galdar*. At some time during the creation period *galdar* struck a rock at Budjala, causing so much water to flow that it overwhelmed two men who were guarding some sacred objects. The ancestral people swam to an island, where they rested until the flood had subsided. [823 778]

The four lines of lozenges, *a, a*, represent the running water, and the three transverse panels, *b, b, b*, the sand-banks in the stream. The four rectangles with the projections at each end are the sacred objects. There was no explanation for the fish.

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[68] It was the serpent, *julungur*, which swallowed one of the Wawalik sisters at the Mirrirmina waterhole, see myth, p. 275, and Warner (1937), p. 250. Warner places this waterhole on the Glyde River. The Rev. Ellemor's informants say that Mirrirmina is an extensive swamp between the Woolen and Buckingham Rivers. Both Warner and Ellemor, however, place the waterhole in the same clan area, Liaalaomir. [133]

[69] The Rev. Ellemor considers these two women are similar to the *Wawalik* sisters. See Warner (1937), p. 250; and myth, p. 278.

The Saw-fish, Nalgan

Plate 127C belongs to the saw-fish, *nalgan*, totem of Milingimbi. Four saw-fish are depicted, two in the upper panel at *a, a*, and two in the lower at *b, b*. In the lower panel a fresh-water tortoise is shown between the tails of the saw-fish. Scattered throughout the drawing are small star-like designs which represent the star-fish, *midjala*. These fish provide food for the tortoises. The oval designs between the star-fish represent seaweed, *djineul*, and the dots, its fruit. The two fish on the right side of the upper panel are called by the native name of *wungulbu*, and the three transverse cross-hatched panels, *c, c, c*, are sand-bars near the totemic place. There are three flying fish, *digar*, at the upper edge of the bark painting. 532 778 823

The Turtle, Wilira

The totemic place of the turtle, *wilira*, pictured in Pl. 127D, is an island called Nulgunin-numa, situated north-west of Elcho Island. The triangular patterns occupying most of the surface of the bark painting are clouds created by the three turtles spraying water into the sky. Two king-fish are shown in the clouds, one at *a* and one at *b*.

2. SMOKING PIPES AND MYTHS

197 276 [171]

As far as I am aware the long smoking pipe, Fig. 59A, B, is used in Australia only by the aborigines of Arnhem Land and the adjacent islands.

Tobacco smoking was introduced by the Malays within the last century or so when they visited Australia during their periodical journeys to collect trepang and pearl shell, though the *Baijini* myth suggests that the aborigines may have become acquainted with tobacco at an even earlier date. After the Commonwealth Government, about 1910, prohibited the Malays from coming to Australia the aborigines continued to use the Malay pipe, smoking either a substitute or European tobacco, occasionally issued by white traders and missionaries. [648] [439 797]

In general, the pipes[70] are made in a few minutes from the pithy stem of a shrub (*Guettarda speciosa*). The aboriginal removes the pith with a thin stick, plugs one end with bark, cuts a hole in the side an inch or more from the end, fits a bowl[71] saved from the old pipe, and, except for the engraving, the pipe is complete. 276 [824]

The pipes I collected are about an inch in diameter and varied in length from eight inches at Groote Eylandt to thirty inches at Yirrkalla, Fig. 59B. It was necessary to have a longer pipe stem at Yirrkalla so that there would be sufficient room for the totemic designs. In use, Pl. 124D, the aboriginal takes a [171]

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[70] The bowls of the early pipes were made of tin-plate and carefully treasured. Since the last war, most pipe bowls are made from shortened cartridge cases. As mentioned earlier, the aborigines recognize the difference between the *Baijini* pipes, which are similar to those used by Europeans, and those of the Malays. The *Baijini* were a mysterious group of fair-skinned people who once camped at Port Bradshaw, myth, p. 333. [177]

[71] Warner (1937), p. 461, refers to the smoking pipes of the Murngin, near Milingimbi, and Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 102, to those at Yirrkalla.

[text continues on p. 391]

pinch of tobacco, presses it tightly into the bowl, and lights it either with a coal 276
from the camp-fire, or a burning twig. He fills his mouth and lungs with tobacco smoke, then passes the pipe to a companion, who does likewise. This usually exhausts the supply of tobacco, but if there is any left the pipe is either passed to another aboriginal or back to the first man.

Most of the smoking pipes at both Groote Eylandt and Yirrkalla are covered 276
with engravings. Those at Groote Eylandt had herring-bone patterns which did 532*
not appear to have any specific meaning, but those at Yirrkalla and Milingimbi
all bore complex designs, most of them illustrating totemic stories belonging [171]
to the sacred life of the men. Because of this, the owners kept the stems wrapped in paper-bark, Fig. 59A, so that the decorations could not be seen by the women when the pipes were used in the main camp. The bark painting of *Wanatjai*, Pl. 95B, shows him holding a Malay pipe in either hand.

As the engravings on the Yirrkalla pipes entailed considerable time and effort, the aborigines were not always willing to part with them. They allowed me, however, to make rubbings of the patterns. These are reproduced in the text figures.

The Crocodile, Baron

This pipe, Fig. 59C, is associated with a *jiritja* totem place of the crocodiles, [778●
baron, which is on the Kariatpa[72] swamp, Caledon Bay.
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The diamond-shaped designs in panel *c* of Fig. 59C are the swamps at Blue Mud Bay. The next panel shows the crocodiles, *b*, lying in the swamps at Kariatpa. Round the reptiles, the designs *a*, *a* represent swamp grass and crocodile eggs.[73] The two lines of lozenge-shaped designs at *d*, *d* are the Kariatpa swamps.

The Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimala

When the fresh-water tortoise, *Mimala*, and his wife were human beings they 773*
lived at Calabaibai, a totemic place on the banks of a fresh-water stream flowing into the sea south of Milingimbi.[74] One day the fresh-water tortoise made a carved human figure, *mimalatuna*, which he carried a long way inland and hid in a sacred place where no women could see it. Being tired after his journey, *Mimala* laid down and went to sleep. On waking up he found he was particularly warm and comfortable, for his body had sunk so deeply in the soft mud that he was almost covered. He saw, too, that the surrounding country was covered with swamp grass and rushes, interspersed with many streams of fresh water. *Mimala*, pleased with the warmth of the mud and the close proximity of so much grass and water, changed himself, and later his wife, into fresh-water tortoises.

From that time the tortoise, *mimala*, has lived either in the fresh-water streams and swamps or the grass that grows near by.

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[72] Myth, p. 308.
[73] These are similar to the *mata* design of the *gumaitj* language group of Caledon Bay.
[74] See log coffin, Pl. 105B, and bark paintings, Pl. 119A, 120A.

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streams during the heavy rain; and the parallel lines, *f*, *f*, rocks and sand-bars in the bed of the river. 276

The Man, Laitjun, and his Fish Trap

In the early days, a man called *Laitjun*[77] made a fish trap on the Koolatong River, in which to catch *paipinga*, a fresh-water fish. The aborigines still use the same kind of fish trap. 773* 276

Fig. 61 shows the present construction of the trap. Across the Koolatong River the aborigines constructed a weir by driving sticks into the bed of the river, leaving an opening in the centre. The space between the sticks was filled with branches, grass and earth, and across the opening an almost submerged paper-bark raft was anchored. When fish are needed the aborigines assemble at the trap and, by running about and beating the water downstream, drive the fish toward the opening. When they reach the partly submerged raft, the fish endeavour to jump over it, but become stranded on top, where they are caught.

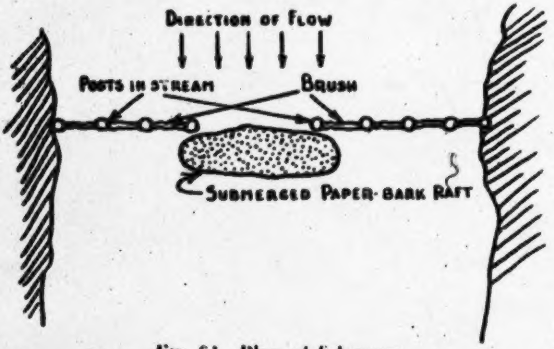

FIG. 61. Plan of fish-trap

On Fig. 60D the parallel lines, *a*, *a*, *a*, are the sticks driven into the bed of the stream and the diamond-shaped patterns the water running between them. The aborigines explained that they would have included the raft in the pipe engraving, but there was not sufficient room. The four groups of parallel lines, *b*, *b*, are trees fallen across the river.

The Fresh-water Goannas, Djerilka

The mythical fresh-water goannas, *djerilka*, lived in a totemic waterhole on the Cato River, near Melville Bay. 773*

The panel *a* in Fig. 62A is the totemic waterhole of the *djerilka*, the herring-bone design symbolizing the water. In panel *b* are the male and female goannas. The female on the top is leaving the waterhole in panel *a*, and the 532* [178 823]

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[77] See myth of *Banaitja* and *Laitjun*, p. 279.

*532 [178] The aborigines told me that, prior to the visit of Mr and Mrs Berndt to Yirrkalla during 1947, they had not carved these small heads. But when they made one and showed it to Mr and Mrs Berndt, the interest shown stimulated them to make more.[23] These little examples of aboriginal craftsmanship, many showing evidence of considerable skill, prove the ability of the aboriginal craftsmen to adapt themselves to changing conditions.

*532 881 114 *Function.* Elkin and the Berndts[24] state that the carved figures they illustrate of 'the Elder Wauwelak Sister, the Great Laintjung, and Laintjung's son Banaitja' are shown only to initiated men. They write: 'The original artist who has made the figure enters the hut; outside, the postulants are sitting or standing with faces turned away, but when the songman begins to clap his sticks, they are led up to look upon the sacred object. Finally, when the singing is completed, the designs on the figure are explained and discussed. At times, during the showing of the object, the figure may be held ritually by an actor who writhes on the ground like the python who swallowed the Wauwelak sisters.'

During my last visit to Yirrkalla (1952) I questioned the aborigines about these statements. The men of both moieties were emphatic that they were incorrect and that the carved figures they had produced for Mr Berndt and me are purely secular and would not be used in any of the secret rituals.[25]

They explained, however, that pole figures (similar to the Chaseling figure) representing *Djunkgao* and his sister *Madalait* are kept in special huts near the ceremonial grounds where the *Djunkgao* ceremonies are being performed. The figure of *Djunkgao* is shown to all the initiated men, but that of *Madalait* to only a few of the older tribal leaders.

*532 ●778 The pole figures of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* are carved in hard wood, painted with the appropriate designs and decorated with *dua* ceremonial string. At the completion of the rituals the string is removed for future use and the posts, with other sacred objects, buried in the mud of a sacred waterhole.[26] The following year the same figures are taken out, re-painted and re-decorated. They usually last about three years.

*532 The carved figures in my collection, *Tjambuwal*, *Laitjun*, or even the carved figures of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*, would not have been used in any sacred ceremonies. They were produced because the native men enjoyed making them and because we were interested.

*532 177 322 *Methods of Manufacture.* During the last war there was a large Air Force camp near Yirrkalla where, at one time or another, most of the able-bodied aborigines were employed. During that time the aborigines not only learned the

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[23] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 9, illustrate a number of the carved heads collected by Mr and Mrs Berndt.

[24] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 50.

[25] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 58, state that the carved heads 'are shown to novices at initiation, and to postulants at ceremonies of revelation'.

[26] Warner (1937), p. 356, describes how the sacred objects of the *dua narra* ceremonies (analagous to those of *Djunkgao* at Yirrkalla) are buried in the mud of the sacred totemic waterhole.

use of steel tools, but acquired for themselves a stock of jungle knives, tomahawks, 532*
wood rasps and files. With these tools the aborigines cut and filed the wooden 177
figures into shape with much dexterity. 322

In sharp contrast to these facts is the account given by Elkin and the Berndts.[27] When describing the manufacture of the carved figures at Yirrkalla, these authors wrote: "The artist chips it [the figure] skilfully with a knife or a broad "shovel-nosed" spear-point. . . . The artist spends several days[28] carving in the details and scraping the surface smooth with a knife blade, rough stone or piece of shark's skin "sand paper"."

As Mr and Mrs Berndt were at Yirrkalla less than a year previous to our arrival (the Air Force camp at that time had not long been disbanded) the aborigines would then have had as many, if not more, steel tools than at the time of our visit. It is not reasonable therefore to expect that the aborigines would have been using the primitive tools reported by Elkin and the Berndts.

Tjambuwal, the Thunder-man, and his Ceremonial Objects

Two figures of the mythical thunder-man, *Tjambuwal*, were collected, Pl. 776
130A, B, and Pl. 130E, F; myth, p. 282. 778●

Associated with these carved figures are five ceremonial objects used in the *dua* ceremonies of the thunder-man. They are: the club, *burungunda* (Pl. 130D), 532* with which *Tjambuwal* strikes the cliff; the spear, *larapan* (Pl. 130J), with which he spears the rock cod, *akurata*; the club, *barlait* (Pl. 130C), with which he kills the fish; the ceremonial object, *munan* (Pl. 130G, H), symbolizing the loops of clouds, *wulmu*, belonging to the thunder-man; and the yam, *bualku* or *bawal* (Pl. 131E) created from the fragments of the club, *burungunda*.

The symbolism of the designs on the *Tjambuwal* figure, Pl. 130A, B, refers 773*
to the time when, at the beginning of the wet season, he strikes the cliffs at
Jalboa headland (Pl. 91E) with his club and throws the white stones, *milarik* 532*
(Pl. 91F) into the sky. These stones quickly increase in size until they become large cumulus clouds, in which *Tjambuwal* travels from place to place.

The two lines meeting at an angle across the front of the figure (Pl. 130B), and the diagonal lines across the back, symbolize crevices which *Tjambuwal* made in Jalboa headland when he struck it with his club, *burungunda* (Pl. 130D). The vertical lines on the back of the head (Pl. 130A) symbolize falling rain, and the arc-shaped panels on both the back and the front of the figure, the gutters in the distorted rock strata of the cliffs at Jalboa, which were supposedly formed when *Tjambuwal* urinated on the cliff.

The symbolism of the designs on the second figure of *Tjambuwal*, illustrated on Pl. 130E, F, is somewhat different. The spots on the diagonal band across the chest of the figure (Pl. 130E) picture the white stones, *milarik*, at Jalboa headland (Pl. 91F). The curving lines to the right of this band are cumulus clouds,

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[27] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 49.

[28] The more expert of the aboriginal craftsmen I saw in 1948 were able to complete and paint a human figure in about seven hours, and a carved head in four.

[text continues on p 421]

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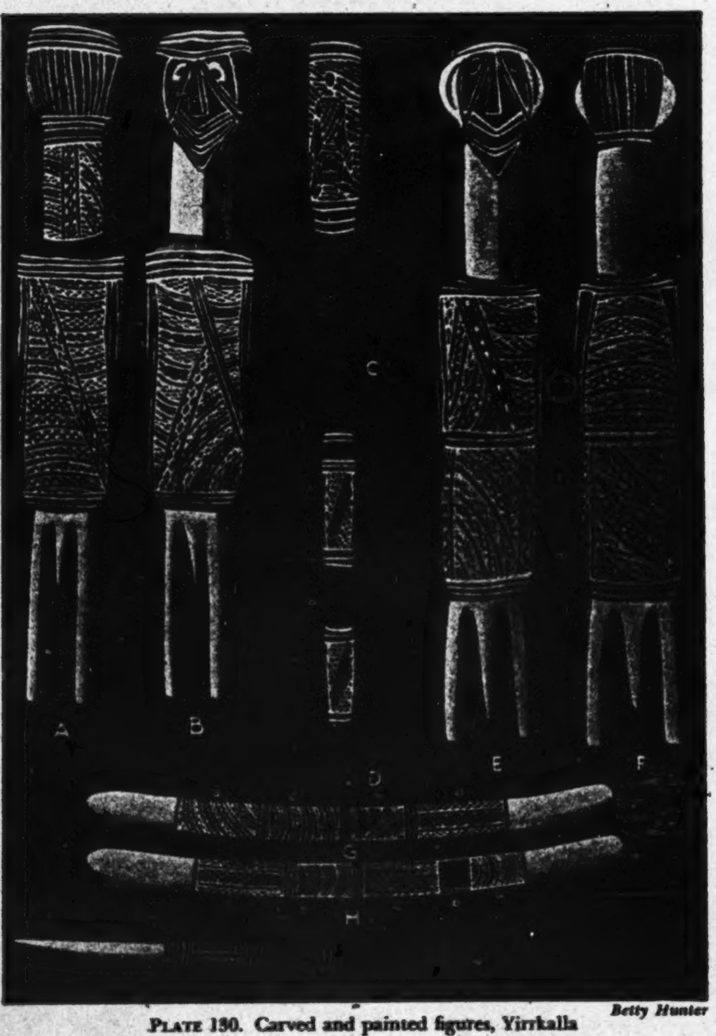

Betty Hunter

PLATE 130. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B, E, F Tjambuwal C The club, barlait D The club, burungunda
G, H The ceremonial object, munan' J The spear, larapan

and those to the left, dark-coloured nimbus clouds. The curving lines across the back of the figure (Pl. 130F) represent the thin black stratus clouds, *taioutbut*, which often form in the sky after a thunderstorm has expended itself. The curved panels across the abdomen of the figure are waves made by *Tjambuwal* as he wades through the water in pursuit of the rock cod, *akurata*. The long penis on both figures represents the long curving banners of rain that fall from the base of the thunderstorms. 773* 532*

The Club, Burungunda. Plate 130D is the double-ended club,[29] *burungunda*, with which *Tjambuwal* strikes the cliff at Jalboa headland at the beginning of the wet season. The impact shatters the club into many fragments; these fragments enter the ground and later become the edible yam, *bualku*, which is called *bawal* in the Arnhem Bay area (Pl. 131E). 773* 778● 532*

The Spear, Larapan. Plate 130J is the spear, *larapan*. With this spear *Tjambuwal* transfixes the rock cod, *akurata*, before he leaves his cloud and enters the sea to kill it.[30]

When the aborigines see a meteor speed across the sky they believe its fiery path is created by *Tjambuwal's* spear, *larapan*. The white head of the spear is the meteor itself, and the dots on its head, the white hailstones, *milarik*, at the Jalboa headland (Pl. 91E). The shaft of the spear is curved to represent the path of the meteor. [821]

The Club, Barlait. Plate 130C illustrates the club, *barlait*, used by *Tjambuwal* to kill the rock cod, *akurata*, after he has speared it. On both sides of the club is a painting of the thunder-man with a club in each hand.[31] The curving groups of cross-hatching represent the clouds, *wulmu*.

The Ceremonial Object, Munan. The aborigines believe the curved clouds, *wulmu*, always rest on the head of *Tjambuwal*, the thunder-man (Pl. 90D). These clouds are represented in the *dua* ceremonies by a boomerang-shaped piece of wood called the *munan*.

Plate 130G illustrates the obverse side of the *munan*. Reading from the right, panel *a* indicates new clouds forming after a thunderstorm, and panels *b*, *c* and *d*, clouds which are heavy with rain.

On the reverse side, Pl. 130H, reading from the right, the curving cross-hatched lines, *a*, symbolize the white tops of clouds, and the black rectangle, *b*, a dark-coloured nimbus cloud about to discharge its rain. On the next panel, *c*, the parallel longitudinal lines picture falling rain; the curving lines on the next panel, *d*, more clouds; and the parallel lines, *e*, spent thunder-clouds developing afresh.

The Yam, Bualku or Bawal. In the Yirrkalla myth, the fragments of the *burungunda* club, on entering the ground, are changed into a yam called *bualku*. In the *Tjambuwal* myth of Arnhem Bay (p. 289) the same yam is called *bawal*.

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[29] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 6A and p. 44, figure and describe this club as a yam.

[30] The myth, p. 294, relates that the stench of the decaying fish, ascending into the sky, creates more thunder-clouds.

[31] See also bark painting, Pl. 90B.

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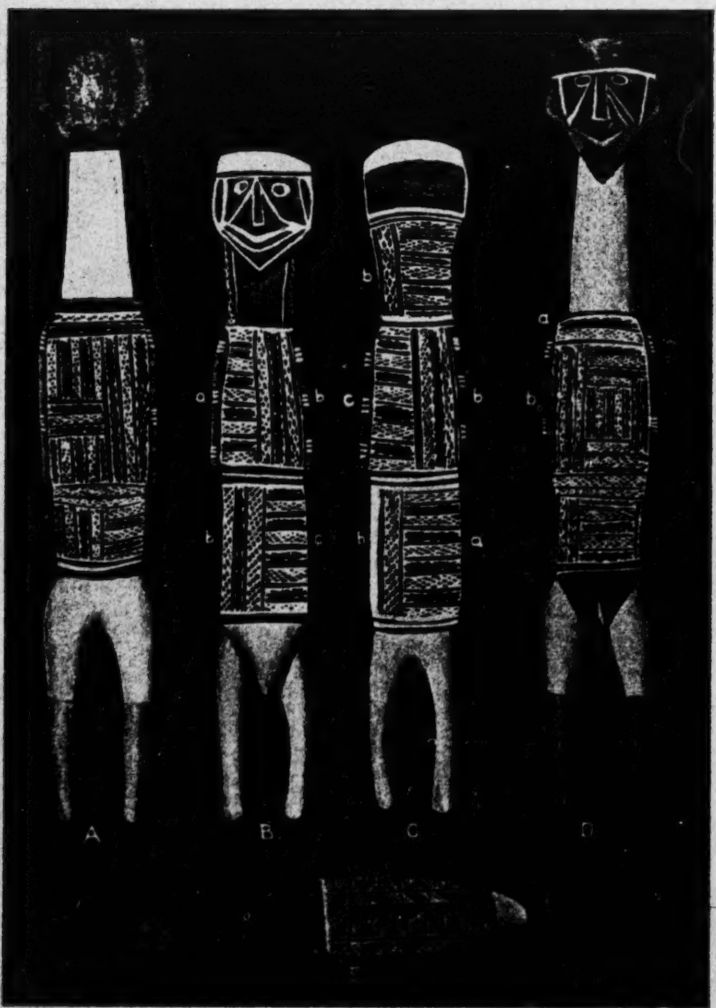

Jean Truren

PLATE 131. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, D The woman, Madalait B, C The man, Djunkgao E The yam, bualko

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

Plate 131E illustrates the edible yam, *bualku* or *bawal*.[32] The cross-hatched panels, according to my informants, refer to the marks on the skin of the yam. It is likely, however, that they have a deeper meaning.

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The Man, Djunkgao, the Woman, Madalait, and their Ceremonial Objects

I collected two carved and painted figures, one of *Djunkgao* and one of his sister, *Madalait*.[33] In addition, the aborigines made a number of objects belonging to the ceremonies of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*. They were: the music stick of *Djunkgao*; the music stick of *Madalait*; the digging stick of *Madalait*; a ceremonial object associated with the lizard, *tjunda*; the carved figure of the lizard, *tjunda*.

The Carved Figure of Djunkgao. Plate 131B, C illustrates the obverse and reverse sides of the figure of *Djunkgao*.[34]

On Pl. 131B the bands of cross-hatching at *a* represent *Djunkgao's* camp among the sand-hills at Jelangbara, a locality north of the entrance to Port Bradshaw, and those at *c*, the camp of his sister *Madalait*.[35] The parallel panels at *b* represent the soft sand which ran from under the feet of the brother and sister as they walked about among the drifting sand-hills.

On the reverse side of the figure (Pl. 131C) the meanings of the decorations are similar to those on the obverse. *Djunkgao's* camp is at *a*, and *Madalait's* at *c*. The designs at *b*, *b*, *b*, symbolize both the familiar running sand design and the parallel sand-hills at Jelangbara.

The Carved Figure of Madalait. Plate 131A, D illustrates the obverse and reverse side of the carved figure of *Madalait*.[36] The cross-hatched panels on the shoulders at *a*, Pl. 131D, have two meanings, the lighter coloured panels being the waves breaking on the shore at Bilapinja Island, and the darker panels, lines of seaweed in the water. Both the waves and the seaweed were the subject of a song by *Djunkgao*. The designs on the body at *b* represent the light on the crests of the waves which attracted the attention of *Djunkgao* at Bilapinja Island. The remainder of the painted decorations picture the marks of the dried salt-water on the body of *Madalait*.

The Music Stick of Djunkgao. Plate 132E, F illustrates the music stick[37] used by *Djunkgao* when, in the creation period, he performed a ceremony at Jelangbara, near Port Bradshaw.

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[32] Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 6B, p. 43, describe a ceremonial object illustrating the *bauri* yam. This is possibly another representation of the *bualku* or *bawal* yam.

[33] Berndt (1952), p. 25, illustrates sketches which, he says, are copies of aboriginal drawings (not reproduced) showing Djanggawul (my *Djunkgao*) with a particularly long penis, and Miralaidj (my *Madalait*) with a greatly elongated clitoris. My carved figures of *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*, Pl. 131A, B, C, D, do not show these characteristics.

[34] See p. 273 for complete myth.

[35] The aborigines pointed out that both on this figure and on the bark painting (Pl. 85E) the camps of the brother and sister were always some distance apart. In other words, they did not sleep together.

[593]

[36] See p. 273 for complete myth.

[37] These music sticks were made and used in pairs. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), Pl. 4B, p. 46, describe and figure one relating to the goanna (probably the same as my lizard, *tjunda*).

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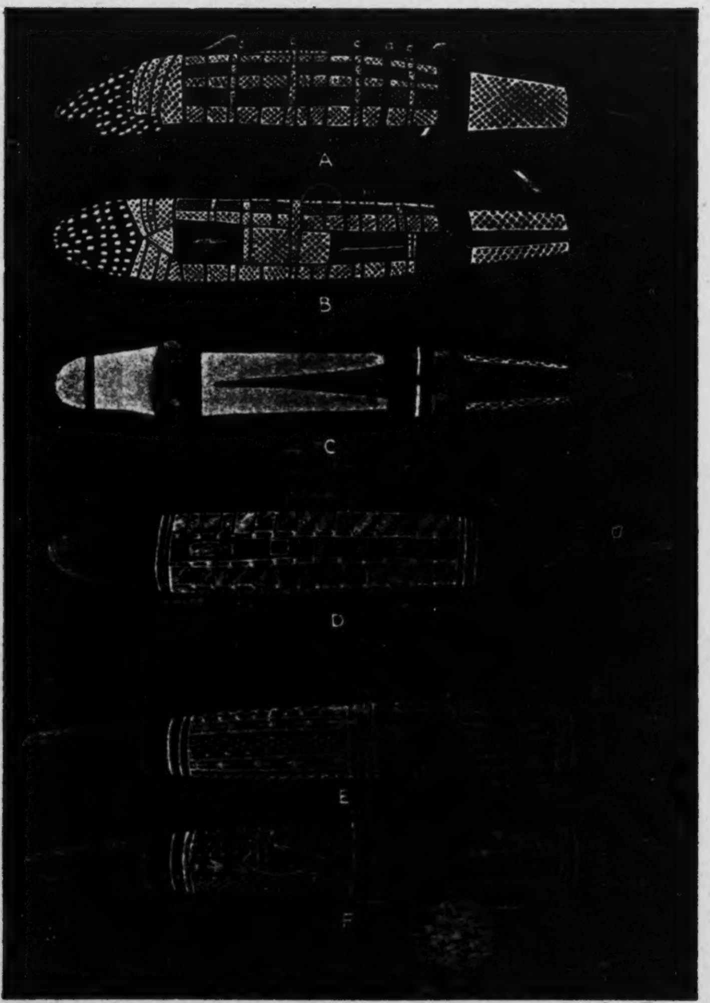

Jean Truran

PLATE 132. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla
A, B, C The shark, mana D The mosquito—Milingimbi
E, F The music stick of Djunkgao

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

On the obverse side the lizard, *tjunda* (Pl. 132F), is pictured in the right-hand panel. In the left is a water-fowl, *buorta*, with its tracks. When *Djunkgao* and *Madalait* saw the water-bird feeding on the seeds of the swamp grass, they said: 'We will "sing" the bird, *buorta*, and the tracks that it makes in the mud, so that they will be our mark forever.' Since that day the bird and its tracks have belonged to the *Djunkgao* sacred objects. 773* 778 ● 532*

The dots on either side of the bird are the grass-seeds it eats, and the cross-hatching, the leaves of that food plant.

The lizard occupies the right-hand panel on the reverse side of the music stick (Pl. 132E). In the left-hand panel, the dots are the seeds and the cross-hatched area, the leaves of the food plant of the bird, *buorta*. The tracks are those of the same bird.

The Music Stick of Madalait. Plate 133E, F pictures the music stick of the woman, *Madalait*.

On the obverse side (Pl. 133E) *tjunda*, the lizard, occupies the left-hand panel and his tracks, with the traditional pattern of the soft sand running down the hill, the right-hand panel.

On the reverse side (Pl. 133F) the lizard is in the right-hand panel, and in the left the mark in the sand made by *Djunkgao's* canoe when he pulled it up on the beach at Jelangbara. The short vertical lines indicate the breaking waves at the same place.

The Walking or Digging Stick of Djunkgao and his Sister. Plate 134C, D represents one of the walking or digging sticks of *Djunkgao* and his sister, *Madalait*, with which they made the sacred wells.[38]

In the centre of the obverse side (Pl. 134D) is the now familiar design of the lizard and the running sand. The long vertical line on the upper panel, *a*, symbolizes the mark made in the sand by *Djunkgao's* canoe as he pulled it up on the beach at Jelangbara.[39] The short transverse lines on either side of *a* are the waves breaking on the beach. The herring-bone designs on the lower panels on both sides of the digging stick are the leaves and branches of *murinji* trees (probably *Casuarina equisetifolia*) which now grow in the sand-hills at Port Bradshaw where *Djunkgao* and his sister pushed their digging sticks into the ground.[40]

The Ceremonial Object. Figure 68A, B illustrates both sides of a *dua* engraved ceremonial object belonging to the mythical man, *Djunkgao*, and the lizard, *tjunda*.

The design on the panel *a* of A pictures the tracks of the lizard on the side of the sand-hill, and the parallel lines on panel *b*, the series of sand-hills which *Djunkgao* 'sang' at Port Bradshaw.[41]

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[38] Berndt (1952), p. 1, states that the walking stick of *Djunkgao* is a symbolic penis. When describing the walking stick (Pl. 134C, D) to me, the aborigines did not state that it was associated in any way with the male sex organ.

[39] Myth, p. 273.

[40] This is possibly the same as the stick, *maurulan*, carried by the sun-woman during her journey across the sky, p. 273.

[41] Myth, p. 273.

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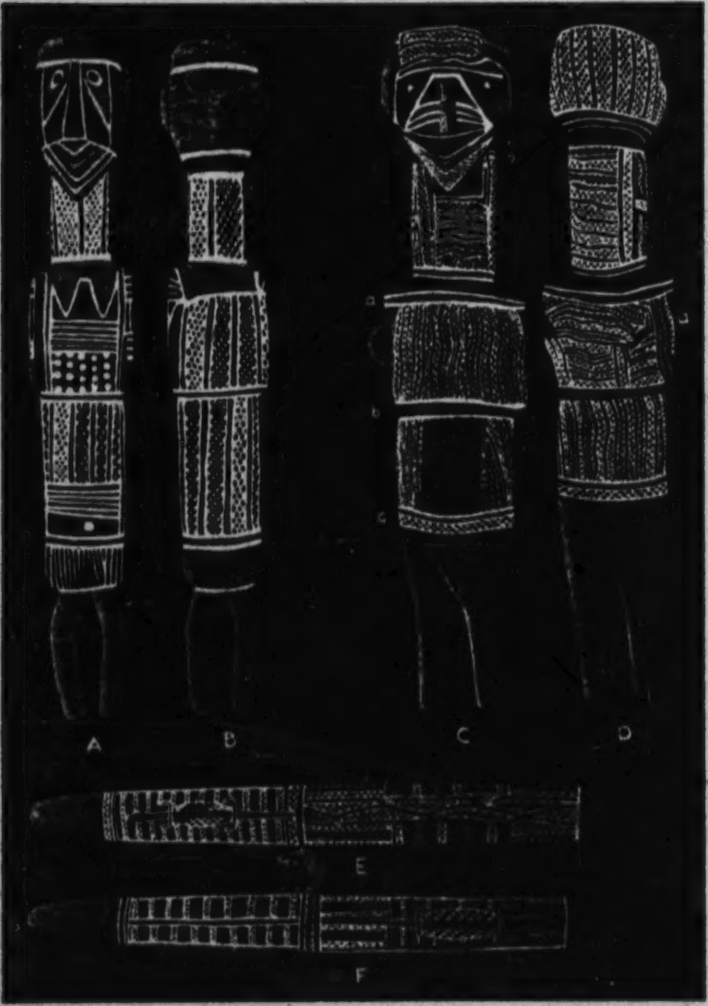

Plate 133. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B The woman, Bunbulama C, D The woman, Malwulwi
E, F The music stick of Madalait

On the reverse side, B, the designs *c* and *d* symbolize the lines of light on the crest of the waves and the mark made in the wet sand by the bottom of the canoe as *Djunkgao* pulled it up on the beach at Jelangbara. 778 773* 532*

The Lizard, Tjunda. Plate 134B is a *dua* carved figure of the lizard, *tjunda*, seen by *Djunkgao* and his sister, *Madalait*, at Jelangbara, north of Port Bradshaw.[42] The cross-hatched parallel panels on the neck and the shoulders are the parallel sand-hills 'sung' by *Djunkgao* at Jelangbara; the zigzag line, the track of the lizard; and the groups of transverse lines on either side, the loose sand running from under its feet as it walked along the crest of a sand-hill.

The Man, Banaitja, or Laitjun

While *Banaitja* was resting on the bottom of the Duluruwaltjalapa swamp, after he had been speared by the aborigines of Blue Mud Bay, he painted designs on every part of his body.[43] Later, when he rose from the water in the form of *Laitjun*, he decreed that these designs should belong to the individual *jiritja matas* (language groups) of north-eastern Arnhem Land.[44] Some of these *mata* designs are painted on the carved figure of *Laitjun*.

Plate 135A, B illustrates the carved and painted figure of *Laitjun*, the transformed *Banaitja*, whose body is covered with the *jiritja mata* designs mentioned in the myth. He is wearing feather ornaments on his beard and arms, and is carrying, in his right hand, the bark bundle[45] (later called *laitjun* or *banaitja*) with which he beat the ground to call the aborigines together. *Laitjun* is shown with a sub-incised penis.[46] Although the decorations on the head and face of the carved figure of *Laitjun* have no ceremonial meaning, those on the front, back and legs represent some, but not all, of the various *jiritja matas* (language groups) of north-eastern Arnhem Land.

a, belonging to the *dalwongu mata* of Blue Mud Bay, refers to hives of wild bees which flew from the Matamataui swamps, at Blue Mud Bay, to Milingimbi, so that they would not be destroyed by a bush-fire.[47]

b, a design similar to that of the *dalwongu*, belongs to the *manaitja mata* of Blue Mud Bay.[48] It refers to totemic honey and honeycomb in unidentified swamps at Blue Mud Bay.

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[42] Myth, p. 273.

[43] For complete myth, see p. 279.

[44] For description of language groups, *matas*, and clan groups, *malas*, see p. 166. [171]

[45] This is similar to the *[illegible]* bark bundle used in the *[illegible]* ceremonies of Groote Eylandt, Pl. 16C. Warner (1937), p. 502, calls similar bark bundles *banitja*.

[46] As mentioned previously, p. 279, this would suggest that the myth of *Banaitja* or *Laitjun* originated in an area where sub-incision was practised.

[47] Bark painting, Pl. 93B. Warner (1937), p. 15, lists wild bees, among other totems, as belonging to the *dalwongu* language group. Berndt (1948), p. 318, states that the design refers to a fresh-water weed. Later, Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, correct this and refer to the *dalwongu* as a *mata* associated with the *[illegible]* bird.

[48] Bark painting, Pl. 121D; also a painted *jiritja* skull, Pl. 101B, C. Berndt (1948), p. 318, gives as its meaning, bees and honeycomb. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, list *manaitja* as a *mala* (clan) group instead of a *mata* (language) group. This may be correct, for when asking the aborigines to which *mata* they belonged, they sometimes gave the name of their *mala*. Our knowledge of the *mata* and the *mala* is incomplete and confused. [114]

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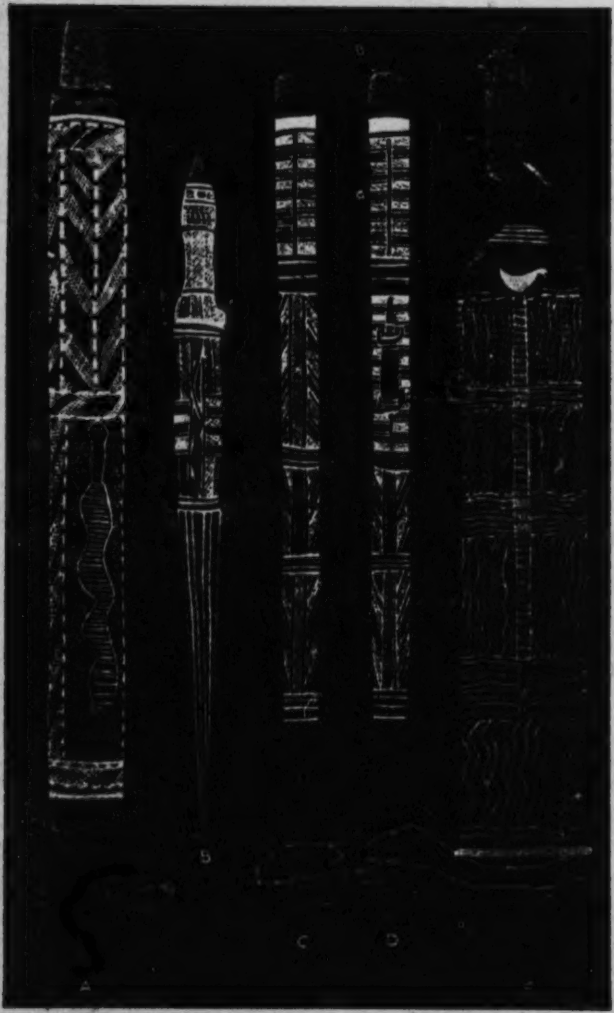

Jean Truran

PLATE 134. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla and Milingimbi

A The serpent, wunungu B The lizard, tjunda
C, D The walking stick of Djunkgao and Madalait E The night-bird, karawak

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The fact that designs *a* and *b* are similar in appearance and linked in the myths suggests that the two *matas* are closely associated. 532* 773*

c, a cross-hatched panel of the *lamuriri mata* of Cape Arnhem, represents a reef in the sea. 778 ●

d, a cross-hatched panel between *c* and *e*, represents the open sea (locality unknown). It belongs to the *maku-unulmer mata*.

e, a cross-hatched panel belonging to the *malakun mata*, represents the salt-water side of a totemic place at Blue Mud Bay.

Designs *c*, *d* and *e* are not listed by any previous investigator, nor are they present on any of the bark paintings. This, coupled with the fact that the artist could not provide additional data about them, would suggest that the information is incomplete and should be accepted with reserve.

f, a series of lozenge-shaped designs, belongs to the *mangalili mata* of Blue Mud Bay.[49] It represents the flower, leaf and bulb of an unidentified water-lily, *jouku*.

g, almost identical to the *mangalili* design, belongs to the *wonguri mata* of Blue Mud Bay. It also represents the water-lily bulb, *jouku*.[50]

h, a line of lozenge-shaped designs on the left leg, belonging to the *madarlpa mata* of Blue Mud Bay, pictures the toredo worm, *milka*, at Blue Mud Bay.[51] The design of the *madarlpa mata* is similar to that used in the fire symbols in the bark painting of the bandicoot, Pl. 116B.

j, on the right leg, belongs to the *gumaitj mata* of Caledon Bay and is associated with the myth of the crocodile, *baru*, the bird, *djiriku*, fire and paper-bark trees.[52]

k, the upper design on the back of *Laitjun*, belongs to an unidentified *mata*, *baijuijur*, near Milingimbi. It represents a hive of wild honey.

m, the lower design, belongs to *jerkurunga* (Warner's Yaernungo) *mata* of the Wessel Islands.[53]

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[49] This design, bearing the same meaning, was used on the body painting of a *jitjin* youth who underwent circumcision at Yirrkalla (Pl. 129C). It is also engraved on a smoking pipe, Fig. 50C. Berndt (1948), p. 318, lists the design as *mangalilji*, meaning a log under water. Later, Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, correct this statement and list the *mangalilji* as a *mata* associated with the *laitjlaitj* parrot. Warner does not mention this language group. [302 88]

[50] Warner (1937), p. 42, lists the *wonguri* language group, *mata*, as north of Caledon Bay, but his totems do not include the water-lily. Berndt (1948), p. 318, records that the *wonguri* design refers to the toredo worm, while later, with Elkin (1950), p. 23, they list *wonguri* as a *mata* design referring to a *laitjlaitj* parrot.

[51] Warner (1937), p. 40, lists the *mardarpa* as a clan in the Blue Mud Bay area, not a language group. Its important high totems are crocodile and fire. Berndt (1948), p. 318, records that the *madarlpa* design refers to fire or ashes inside seaweed and mud. Later, in collaboration with Elkin (1950), p. 23, however, he lists it as the *madarlpa mata* which, they say, refers to the [illegible] bird.

[52] This *gumaitj* design is used on a bark painting of the crocodile, Pl. 119B; of the bush fire and paper-bark trees, Pl. 93B; on the engraved pipe of the crocodile, Fig. 50C; and on a body painting, Pl. 129C. Warner (1937), p. 42, lists the *komaits* (*gumaitj*) *mata* of Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem. This is no doubt a section of the Caledon Bay *mata*. Berndt (1948), p. 318, records *gumaitj* designs, some of which relate to fire and honey, and the others to paper bark. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 23, alter this and state that the *gumaitj mata* means the east wind.

[53] Warner (1937), p. 47, records the totems of the *yaernungo mata*. I did not gather any information on the subject.

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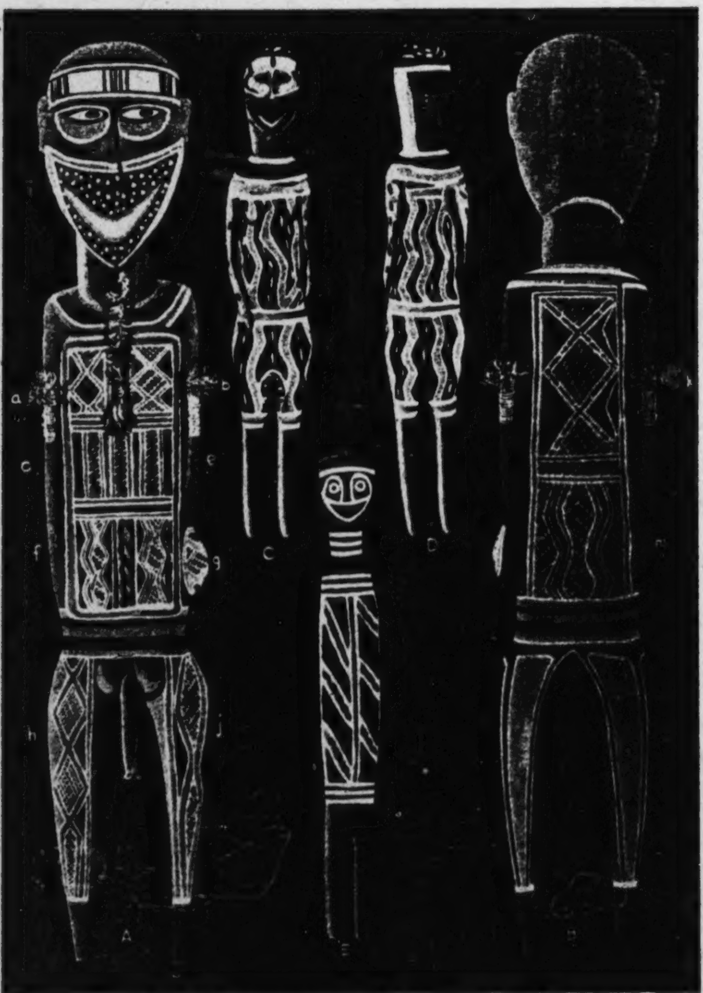

Rosemary Dunnett

Plate 135. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A. B The man, Laitjun or Bansitja C, D The woman, Wurati-laku
E The Mokoi, Wulu-wulu

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

Staff Associated with the Laitjun and Banaitja Ceremonies. This (Pl. 136A, G) 532* is used in some unidentified manner in the *Laitjun-Banaitja* ceremonies belonging 773* to a totemic stream, Duluru-apwa, near Blue Mud Bay. The designs on both 778 ● sides of the staff have a similar meaning.

At *a*, Pl. 136A, is a *jiritja tinimbu* fish. Above its head is a rain-cloud created by the fish, and to the left, a totemic rock also associated with the same creature.

The central line in panel *b* is a watercourse at Duluru-apwa, and the transverse cross-hatched panels, the grass growing along its banks.

Panel *c* refers to water-lilies, *jouku*, which grow in the swamp at *d*. In panel *e* are more water-lilies.[54]

The Woman, Bunbulama

Plate 133A, B depicts the obverse and reverse sides of a carved figure of a 532* mythical woman, *Bunbulama*,[55] who, with her brother, *Wuluwait*, is associated 773* with rain-making.[56]

The cap on the head of the figure, Pl. 133A, represents the swamp-grass which, in place of hair, grows on the scalp of *Bunbulama*. The double triangles below the shoulders are the breasts, and the transverse parallel lines below them the body scars used as decoration by both men and women. The series of white dots across the upper part of the abdomen symbolize storm-clouds and the vertical cross-hatched panels, below, rain falling from them. The navel is shown as a white dot and the pubic hairs as a series of vertical parallel lines immediately below. The vertical panels on the reverse side, Pl. 133B, symbolize falling rain.

The Woman, Malwulwi

Plate 133C, D represents the ancestral woman, *Malwulwi*, who during creation times was drowned near Blue Mud Bay.[57] The wavy cross-hatched panels over her body and neck symbolize the high tide that overcame her, and the bands across the shoulders, abdomen and hips, the marks made by the water on the totemic tree (the transformed body of *Malwulwi*) at different seasons of the year. Her distended abdomen, due to pregnancy, is indicated by the black rectangle in the front. *Malwulwi's* dog, the little rat, *nik-nik*, is shown at *a*, near the right shoulder blade on the back of the figure, Pl. 121A.

The Woman, Muralunangau, of Bremer Island

The *dua* woman, *Muralunangau*, was expert in finding the edible yam, *maulka*. One day, feeling lonely, she picked some of the *maulka* flowers, placed them in her hair, painted her face white and, visiting another woman, *Bunbulama* (Pl. 133A, B), who lived near by, asked her to join in a dance. To this *Bunbulama* readily agreed, she in turn decorating herself with the blossoms of

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[54] This design is the same as that of the *mangalili mata* of Blue Mud Bay, Fig. 61K.

[55] See also bark painting, Pl. 91C, and bark figure, Pl. 65C, D.

[56] Warner (1937), p. 210, describes a method of rain making which resembles that used by the aborigines of Yirrkalla.

[57] Myth, p. 431.

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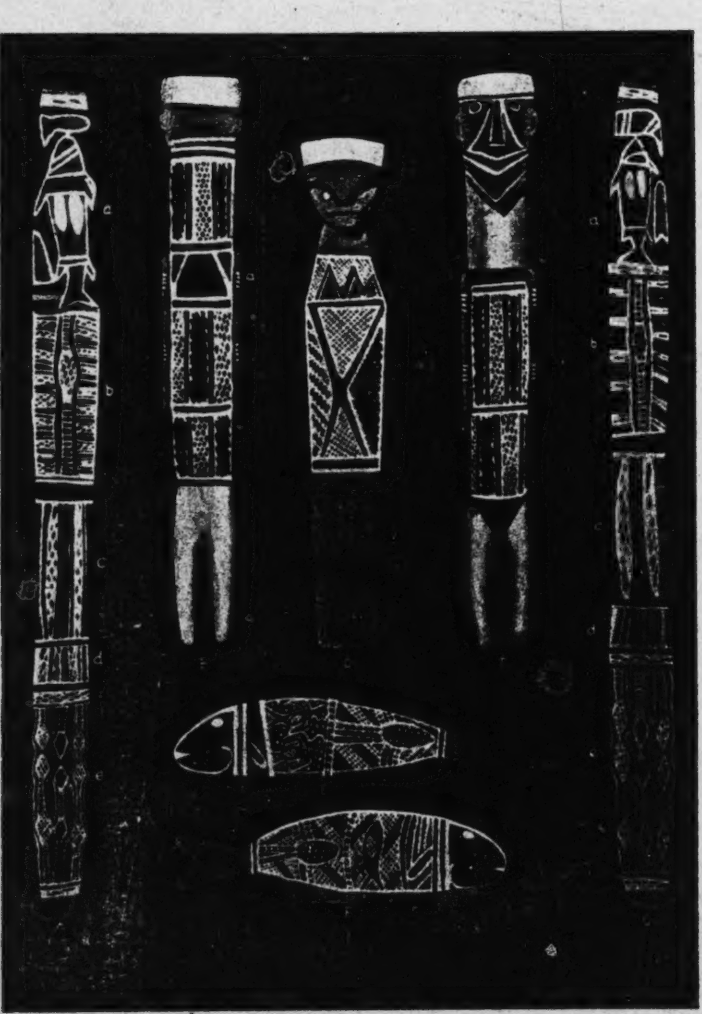

PLATE 136. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, G A staff, Banaitja ceremonies B, D The woman, Muralunangau
C The man, Wurumu E, F, The fish, naruwilja

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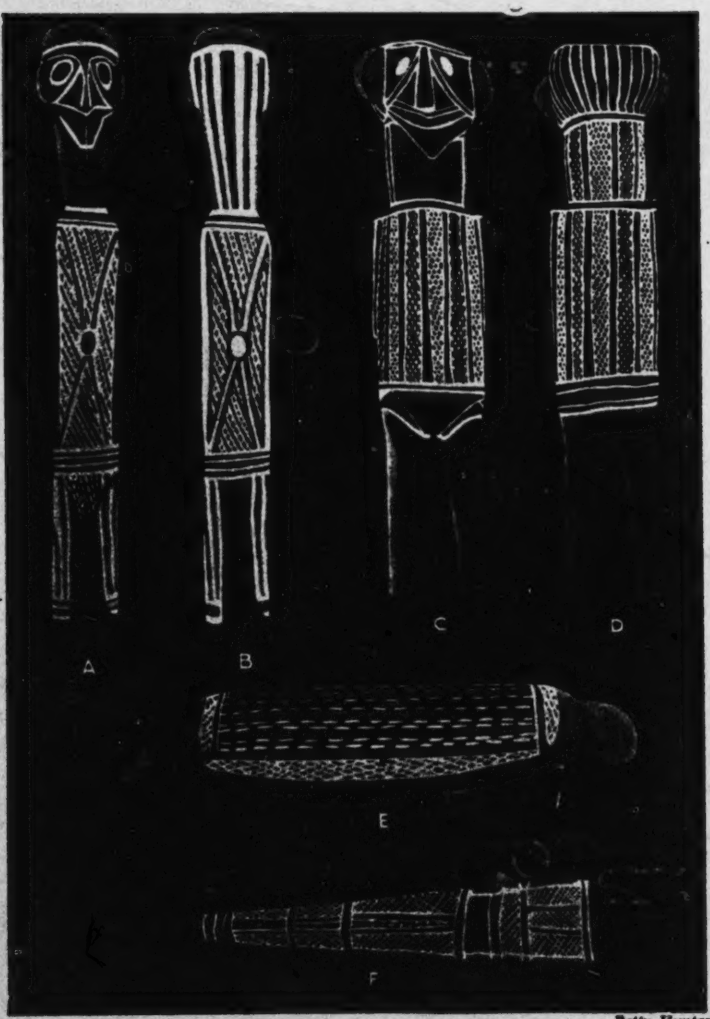

Betty Hunter

PLATE 137. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B The Macassan woman
C, D Woman, unidentified
E The echidna, tjiramuna
F Shark, unidentified

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The Wawalik Sisters

In the fragment of the *wawalik* ceremonies[75] which we witnessed at Yirrkalla 778
the aborigines used two ceremonial poles. One, Pl. 138B, represents the elder 773*
sister whose blood, after she had given birth to a child, offended the serpent,
jurlungur, which lived in the well, Mirrirmina; the other, Pl. 138A, represents 532*
the younger sister.[76]

The Ceremonial Poles. Plate 138B is the complete design on the sacred pole belonging to the elder *Wawalik* sister. The strip of frayed bark on top is her hair and the curving designs, the blood caused by the birth of her child.

Plate 138A belongs to the younger *Wawalik* sister. The lower triangular designs picture the water in the sacred well of *jurlungur*, the serpent. The parallel vertical lines in the upper portion indicate the water flowing into the well.

2. CEREMONIAL OBJECTS FROM NORTH-EASTERN ARNHEM LAND

The Fresh-water Tortoise, Mimala

This bull-roarer, shaped like a paddle, belongs to Diawirinja, west of Arnhem 778
Bay, the totem place of the fresh-water tortoise, *Mimala*. The bull-roarer is so [562
sacred that even its sound must not be heard by the women. 534]

During a burial ceremony at Diawirinja in creation time the fresh-water
tortoise, *Mimala*, then a man, made four bull-roarers, similar to the one illus- 773*
trated, and buried them in those parts of the ceremonial ground over which 778
everyone would dance. Though the women were assisting in the burial rituals,
they, of course, were unaware of the sacred objects under their feet. At the 764
conclusion of the rituals *Mimala* hunted the women away, dug the bull-roarers out of the sand and threw them into a nearby waterhole, where they have since been transformed into four large trees. Similar bull-roarers, after they have been used in the present-day *mimala* ceremonies of Diawirinja, are thrown into a sacred waterhole forbidden to the women. Being made of hard, durable wood, it is only necessary, the following year, to take the bull-roarers from the water and re-decorate them.[77]

Plate 144A, B is the obverse and reverse sides of the bull-roarer. The tortoise 532*
is shown in panel *a* on B, surrounded by dots indicating the bamboos growing in 778
his totemic swamp. In panel *c* is *Mimala* again, accompanied by an unidentified diving bird with which he is linked in the myth.

Panel *b* on B, and *d*, *e* and *f* on A all picture hives of wild honey, the dots
being the bees and the cross-hatched diamonds the honey. The transverse bars,
x, *x*, *x*, on A and B symbolize the sacred waterhole into which the bull-roarers
are thrown at the completion of the *mimala* ceremonies. [196]

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[75] For more complete myth, see p. 275. [76] Bark painting, Pl. 88A.

[77] These and similar sacred objects last for several years under water. If buried in the ground, they would soon be destroyed by termites.

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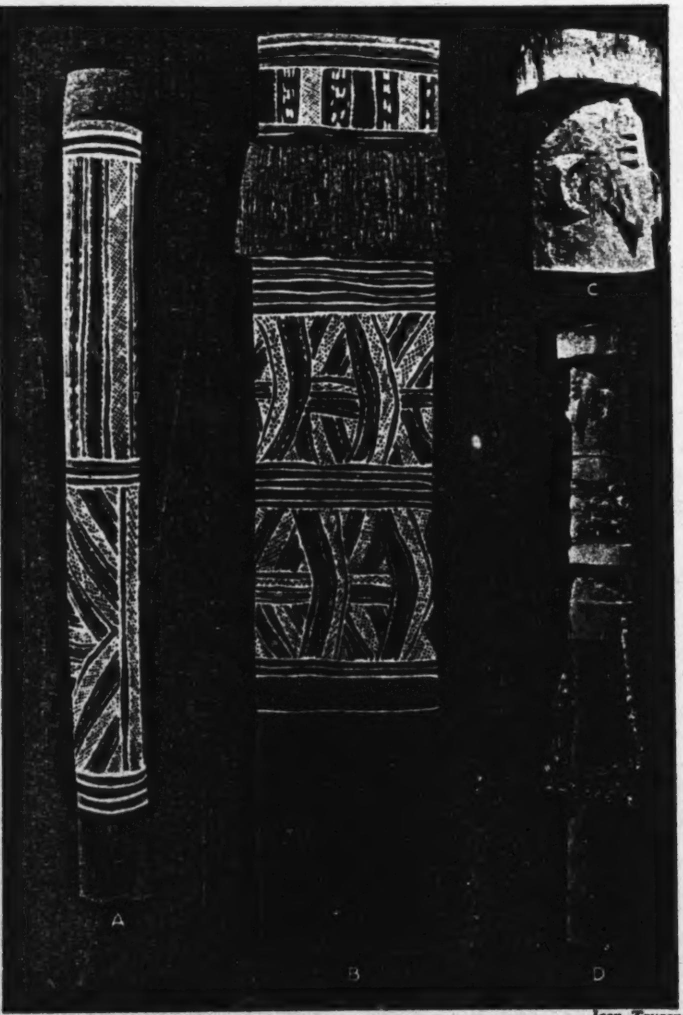

Jean Truran

PLATE 138. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A The younger Wawalik sister
B The elder Wawalik sister
C Head of the Chaseling figure
D The Chaseling figure

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The Mosquito Sacred Object

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Plate 132D is a sacred object of the mosquito totem of Milingimbi. It belongs 778 to the *dua narra* ceremonies. Collected by F. M. Setzler.

3. CARVED AND PAINTED HUMAN HEADS

The Two Brothers, Bauaramin and Wururunga

The two brothers, *Bauaramin*[78] and *Wururunga*, set out to kill their enemy, 628 *Djunmundia*, who had previously murdered their father.[79] 532+

Plate 139D, E, A, H illustrates the carved heads of the two brothers, *Bauaramin* 773* and *Wururunga*.

The designs on the face of *Bauaramin*, Pl. 139D, E, and the white line down the nose, which represents the deadly tiger-snake, *dunbania*, are always painted [302] on the face of the aborigines when they are setting out on an avenging expedition. They are known as the 'death-marks'.[80] The darker cross-hatched panels on the side of the head, Pl. 139D, indicate the base of the thunder-clouds, and the lighter coloured ones, their white tops.

The white dots on the face of *Wururunga*, Pl. 139H, are hail-stones, *milarik*, and the hole at the base of the nose, an attempt to represent a skull, for *Wururunga* has long since been dead.

On the side of the head of *Wururunga*, Pl. 139A, the darker cross-hatched panel represents falling rain, and the lighter coloured ones a hail-storm. The white dots on the side of the head also indicate hail-stones. When these hail-stones fall to the ground in *dua* territory they are sometimes transformed into white stones, *milarik*.[81] The dots on the neck are falling rain, and the white cap, the tops of cumulus clouds.

The Spirit Man, Duwuliana

This *dua Mokoi*, *Duwuliana*, lives in a forest at Arnhem Bay. As his only 776 food is the honey of the wild bees, he carries only a honey basket.[82] 262

At the beginning of the dry season the basket is clean, having been well washed by the heavy storms of the wet season. As the dry season advances the basket becomes progressively darker in colour, due to the accumulated honey and dirt, for *Duwuliana* is a careless fellow who never washes his honey basket, knowing that the next wet season will save him the trouble. At the beginning of the dry season the honey in the hives in the trees is a golden-yellow in colour, but it gradually darkens and becomes less pleasant to eat as the season advances. The aborigines blame *Duwuliana* for this change, claiming that if he were more cleanly and washed his basket regularly they would always have clear golden honey.

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[78] In the myth of the bark painting, Pl. 98A, *Bauaramin* is called *Tjuna-tjuna*.

[79] See myth of *Tjuna-tjuna* and *Wururunga*, p. 303.

[80] See myth, p. 305.

[81] See the white stones, *milarik*, at the totem place of the thunder-man at Jalboa, Pl. 91F. [285

[82] A tightly woven basket which will hold honey.

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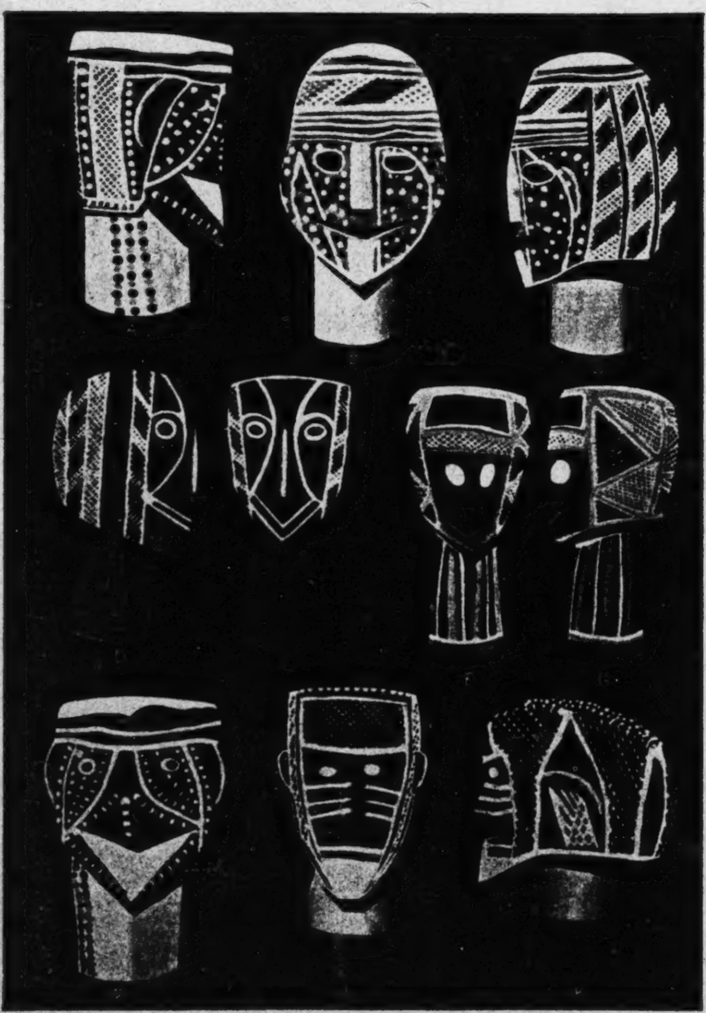

PLATE 139. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, H The man, Wururunga B, C The man, Duwuliana D, E The man, Bauaramin
F, G The Baijini, Tankupou J, K The Mokoi, Jindjaraui

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

The designs on the head of *Duwuliana*, Pl. 139B, C, all refer to rain, hail and thunder-clouds. The dots on the face of B are hail-stones, and the cross-hatched panel across the forehead, small clouds. On the side of the head, Pl. 139C, the cross-hatched panels indicate falling rain, and the white crown, the tops of cumulus clouds. 532* 776 778

The Baijini Man, Tankupou

Plate 139F, G pictures the carved head of a *Baijini* man, *Tankupou*, who once lived at Port Bradshaw.[83] The black rectangle on the forehead, Pl. 139F, is the pillow of *Tankupou*, and the cross-hatched panel beneath, the pillow-slip. The designs on Pl. 139G all refer to the cotton goods owned by the *Baijini*, and the vertical lines on the neck to the posts of the *Baijini* house. 177 773* 532*

The Baijini Man, Gurumuluna

Gurumuluna was the head man of the *Baijini* visitors to Port Bradshaw. He is now included in the pantheon of mythical beings who created the topography of Port Bradshaw. [776]

Plate 140A, B, C pictures the carved head of *Gurumuluna*. The designs on the forehead, Pl. 140B, indicate a distinguishing badge which, according to my informants, is similar to that worn by a ship's captain. The two triangles in front of the ear, Pl. 140C, are the cotton sheets for *Gurumuluna's* bed, and the cross-hatched rectangle in the same position on Pl. 140A, his pillow. The cross-hatched triangles on the top of the head and behind the ears represent the roof of the house of the *Baijini*, which was constructed of bamboo rafters and palm-tree thatch. The parallel vertical lines on the neck refer to the upright posts of the house.

The Spirit Man, Jindjaraui

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The spirit man, *Jindjaraui*, lives on the shores of a swamp west of Arnhem Bay. This *Mokoi* carries a long steel knife in his hair which, when he strikes it, gives off a clear bell-like note. This sound guides the *jiritja* spirits of the dead belonging to the Arnhem Bay area to *Jindjaraui's* camp, one of the *jiritja* 'heavens'.[84] 773* 776 [775]

Plate 139J, K illustrates the carved head of the *Mokoi*, *Jindjaraui*. The dark-coloured triangle above the ear on Pl. 139K is the blade of the steel knife the *Mokoi* carries in his hair and the cross-hatched rectangle below, its handle. The cross-hatching on either side of the knife indicates clouds and the dots on the top

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[83] For more complete details of the *Baijini* myth, see p. 333.

[84] Berndt (1948), p. 94, claims that the spirits of the *jiritja* dead from Yirrkalla go to Badu (Mulgrave Island) in the Torres Straits. He, however, refers to fifteen other names for the *jiritja* heaven. Although my *jiritja* informants from Yirrkalla stated emphatically that their spirits went to Nalkuma (p. 331), not to Badu, and I did not obtain such a large number of designations for the *jiritja* home of the dead as did Berndt, the myth associated with *Jindjaraui* indicates that there is more than one *jiritja* heaven. The *dua* moiety at Yirrkalla, on the other hand, refer to only one heaven, i.e. Purelko (myth, p. 325), although the *dua* moiety of Milingimbi call their land of the dead Djiraia. [114 775]

*532 *Bunbulama* and her brother, *Wuluwait*. Bark figures are also used in the burial [764] ceremonies, where they are used to represent children. They are placed beside the corpse so that it will not be lonely.

*532 ● 778 *773 The figures of *Bunbulama* and *Wuluwait* have leaves and rushes stuck in the head for hair. In the bark painting, Pl. 94C, these represent the swamp grass in the rain-making bundles. Except for this, all the bark figures in my collection were similar in appearance. For that reason the figures of *Bunbulama* and *Wuluwait* only are illustrated.

The myths associated with the bark painting, Pl. 94C, the carved figure, Pl. 133A, B, and the bark figures, Fig. 65C, D, suggest that the myth of the *Mokoi*, *Bunbulama* and her brother *Wuluwait* covers two different activities. In the myth of the bark painting and the carved figure, the activities of the two *Mokoi* centre on rain-making. In the myth of the bark figure their chief function is to entertain the *dua* spirits of the dead on their journey from earth to their heaven, Purelko.

*773 776 The *Mokoi*, *Bunbulama* and her brother *Wuluwait*, live in a jungle called Mumulara, on the western shores of Melville Bay. In the early days *Wuluwait* was a good hunter of turtles. One day, when out in his canoe, he sighted a particularly large *dua* turtle floating on the water, but in spite of all his care he could not get close enough to spear it. Disappointed, *Wuluwait* returned and told *Bunbulama* about his bad luck. She persuaded him not to be worried about the loss of the turtle because, as there was always plenty of food on the sea coast and in the surrounding jungle, she would be able to collect sufficient food for them both. From then until now the woman, *Bunbulama*, has provided the food.

[775 616] At the present time, however, it is the duty of these two *Mokoi* to entertain the *dua* spirits of the dead during the first evening of their journey to the *dua* heaven, Purelko. When it becomes dark the woman, *Bunbulama*, returning from the jungle with a bundle of red blossoms called *banamin*,[88] asks her brother to blow his drone pipe, so that the travelling spirits will find *Bunbulama's* camp. When they arrive, everyone spends the hours of darkness in dance and ceremony, carrying in their hands the flowers gathered by *Bunbulama*.[89] As daylight approaches, the *dua* spirits of the dead depart on the next stage of their journey to Purelko, via Dambalia (Bremer Island), and the brother and sister go back into the dense jungle so that none of the aborigines can see them.

[*532] Figure 65C illustrates the bark figure of the woman, *Bunbulama*; Fig. 65D, her brother *Wuluwait*. Both figures have grass stuck in their head and a projection from the chin which represents a beard.[90]

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[88] In another myth, this flower is called *wakuru-naul*, p. 327.

[89] See myth of journey of the *dua* dead, p. 325.

[90] My informants stated that the woman, *Bunbulama*, wore a beard, similar to that of her brother. This beard, however, is not shown on the bark painting of these two people, Pl. 94C.

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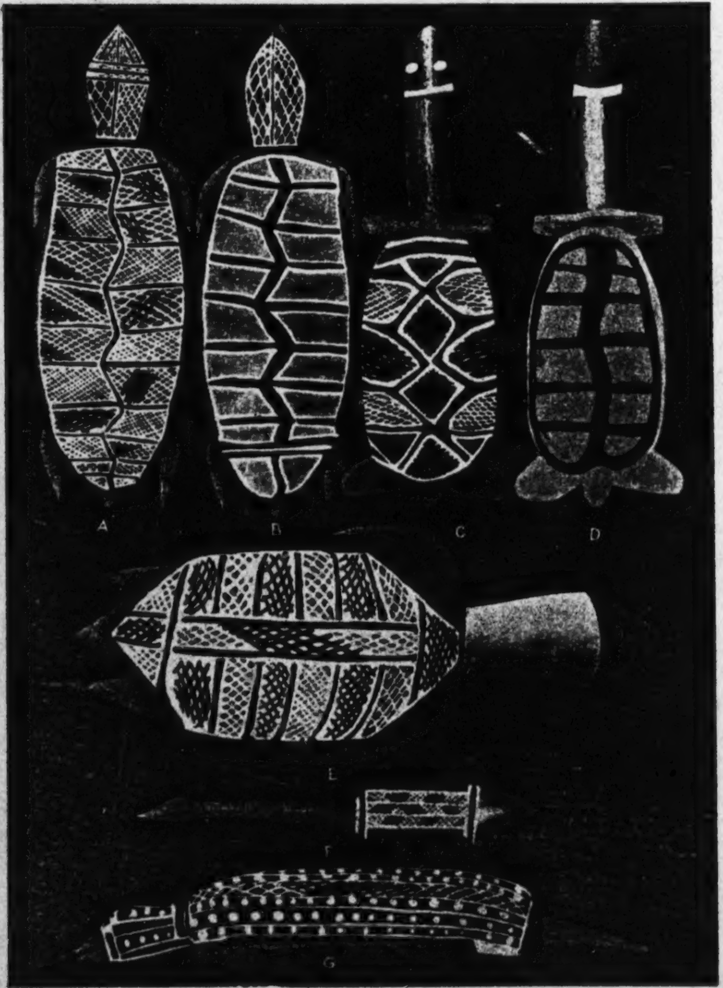

Plate 141. Carved and painted figures, Yirrkalla

A, B, E The green turtle C, D The tortoise F The snake-bird G The bandicoot

CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

(1) YIRRKALLA

The Green Turtle, Gariwa

In creation times, when the *dua* green turtle, *gariwa*, and the *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, *kouwaradji*, were men, they lived together on the beach at Yirrkalla. One day, when the two men were discussing some trivial matter, the hawksbill man lost his temper and speared the green-turtle man. The wounded man was so enraged over this unjustified attack that he changed himself into the green turtle. His totemic place is now at the bottom of the sea, between Yirrkalla and Bremer Island.[1] 532* 773* [823 778]

Plate 141A, B, E is two carved figures, in the round, of the present-day green turtle, *gariwa*. The designs on the back represent the shell pattern of the carapace.

The Serpent, Wununga

This staff, from Milingimbi, represents *wununga*, the mythical serpent, whose voice is the sound of the log gong, *uvar*.[2] This serpent, also called *muit*,[3] lives in a large waterhole at Milingimbi. The staff is used in the *narra* rituals. [534]

The main design on Pl. 134A is the mythical serpent, *wununga*; the smaller designs are young snakes, the progeny of *wununga*. No explanation was obtained for the chevron designs on the upper part of the staff. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

The Night-bird, Karawak, and the Opossum, Marungo

The night-bird, *karawak*, is associated in some undetermined way with the *Mokoi* of the dead.[4] In another mythological story[5] *karawak* (probably one of the owls) was friends with the opossum, *marungo*. [776]

The Ceremonial Staff. This staff, Pl. 134E, is used in the totemic ceremonies of the night-bird, *karawak*. It represents a totemic tree near Cape Shields, on which *karawak* sat to talk to the opossum. The carved figure on the top is the night-bird. The same design is repeated lower down. The wavy lines have the same meaning as those on the bark painting of *marungo* and *karawak*,[6] i.e. the marks made by the opossum as it wandered round the base of the totemic tree where *karawak* was perched. 532* 773* 778

The Shark, Mana, at Blue Mud Bay

For myth, see p. 372.

The Carved Figure. On Pl. 132A the series of rectangles means the same as those on the bark painting of the shark, *mana*,[7] i.e. dead palm leaves floating

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[1] See painted coffin of turtle-man, *Gariwa*, Pl. 102B, D.

[2] See log gong, Pl. 147A, C; also Warner (1937), p. 314.

[3] The serpent *muit* which, in the myth of the *gunabibi* ceremony at Milingimbi, swallowed the *Wawalik* sister, although considered by some to be more powerful than *julunggul*, is really the same mythical creature (see Warner, 1937, p. 372).

[4] Myth, p. 312.

[5] Bark paintings, Pl. 115E; also engraved ceremonial message sticks, Fig. 65A, B.

[6] Myth, p. 302.

[7] This is the symbolism employed on the bark painting of *mana*, Pl. 119B.

*532 *773 ●778 on the surface of the swamp. The four vertical panels, *c, c, c, c*, are posts used in the fish trap,[8] the dark line *a* being a larger and much stronger post than the others. The carving lines at the head of the shark are the leaves and the white dots the bulbs of the spike rush, *rakia*.

Looking at the top, Pl. 132B, the rectangles and the intersecting lines still represent the palm leaves and the posts. In the black rectangle, *b* is the fish spear with which *Borolo-borolo* wounded *mana* at Cape Arnhem.[9]

The designs on the bottom of the carved figure, Pl. 132C, are a simple form of X-ray art. The meandering line within the long black diamond indicates the intestines of the fish, and the long oval toward the tail, the vent.

Miscellaneous Creatures

*532 *773 Plate 137E is a simple wooden figure of the echidna,[10] *tjirmunna*, which was speared by the plover-man, *Tjutju* (see myth, p. 354).

Plate 137F is the carving in the round of an unidentified shark.

Plate 141C, D illustrates the obverse and reverse sides of a fresh-water tortoise.

Plate 141F and Pl. 142D are carved wooden figures of a snake-bird, or darter (*Anhinga novae-hollandiae*). On Pl. 142D both the wings and the curiously jointed neck are indicated.

Plate 141G is the wooden figure of the bandicoot, *warut-kuru*. During creation times some careless men, while performing a ceremony on the Gainmaui River, near Caledon Bay, started a bush-fire which burnt out the nest of the bandicoot.[11]

Plate 141J is an unidentified fish.

Plate 141K is the *jiritja* goanna, *bije*, which is associated with the yellow ochre deposit at Gurunga.

(2) GROOTE EYLANDT

171 Plate 142A is a piece of painted bark cut into the shape of a stingray, *imadanja*. The men of Groote Eylandt make these simple bark figures as playthings for their children. The kidney-shaped design is the edible fat within the body of the stingray.

Plate 142B, C shows the obverse and reverse sides of a sheet of painted bark from Groote Eylandt which represents the green turtle, *imoraka*.

Plate 142E is a carved figure of a fish (possibly a leather-jacket). Although this is the only example of carving in the round I collected when at Groote Eylandt, its presence indicates that the Groote Eylanders practise this form of art. The aborigines of Groote Eylandt also carved simple faces, with eyes, nose and mouth, on the sacred poles of the *arawaltja* ceremony (Pl. 12A).

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[8] Bark painting, Pl. 119B.

[9] [illegible] is of interest to note that although in the myth *mana* was a man whilst at Cape Arnhem, he was wounded by *Borolo-borolo* with a multi-pronged fish-spear.

[10] Bark painting, Pl. 113B.

[11] Bark painting, Pl. 116D.

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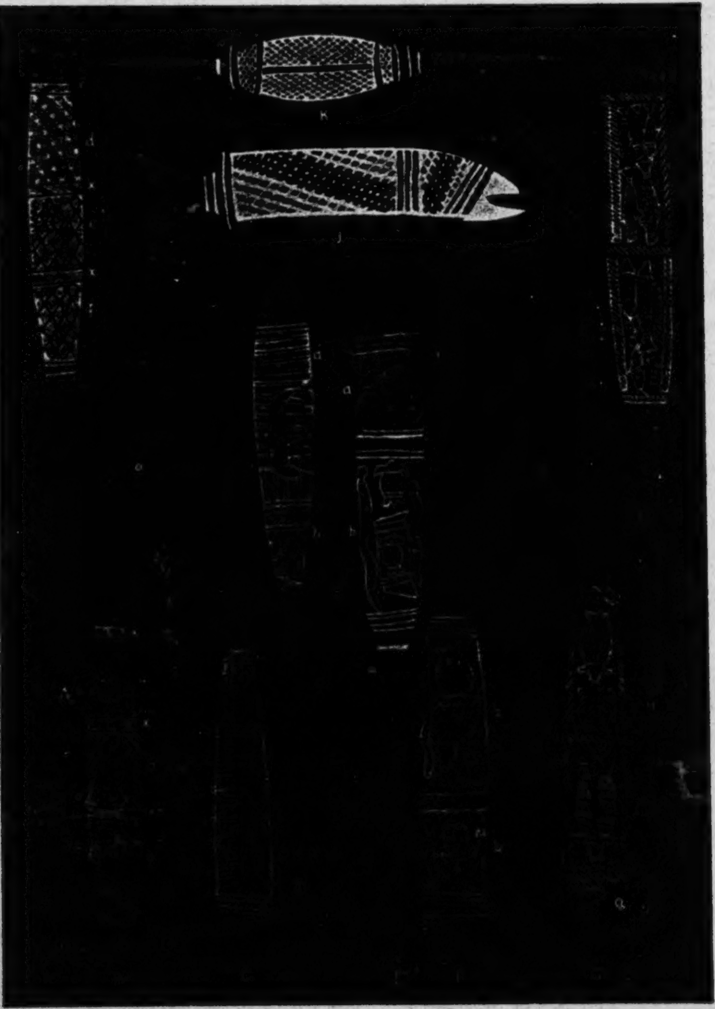

Plate 144. Carved figures, painted paddles and ceremonial objects

A, B. The tortoise, mimala
E, F The Mokoi, Balu-balu
J Fish, unidentified
C, D The Mokoi, Maranatuer and Bunjinkum
G, H Dua creatures of Melville Bay
K The goanna, bija

*532 The body of the
*773 murdered turtle man, *Madapang*, is now a large rock on the mainland opposite
776 Bremer Island.

●[778 Plate 144G, H shows the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle.

823] The upper panel on the reverse side, G, is occupied by the *dua* green turtle, *gariwa*, and the lower by a similar but larger turtle, *madapang*. The latter is the turtle who, when a man, was killed by the *Mokoi* at Melville Bay. The short transverse panels of cross-hatching near the head and tail of the turtle, *madapang*, indicate seaweed, the food of the creature, and the long panels on either side, the sea.

In the upper panel of the obverse side, H, are five dolphins, called *injipana*, and in the lower, five dolphins of a different species, called *bulanbir*. The cross-hatched panels indicate smooth sea water at the totemic place.

The panels at the head of the upper turtle indicate where the reptile dug in the sand to lay its eggs; the long panels on either side represent sea-water. The rounded end of the paddle indicates that it belongs to a man of the *dua* moiety.[20]

(2) Painted Paddles and Spear-throwers from Groote Eylandt

171 On Pl. 145 are four paddles from Groote Eylandt, A, B, C, D and E.

No interpretations were gathered of the various designs painted on the paddles. In the upper panel of Pl. 145A is the figure of a man associated with what appears to be a wind symbol,[21] on Pl. 145D a dugong and a turtle, and on Pl. 145E another dugong. Collected by F. D. McCarthy.

On Pl. 146 are four spear-throwers from Groote Eylandt, A, B and C, D and E, and F. Although, as with the paddles, no interpretations were gathered, it is possible to distinguish a dolphin on D, and a turtle and possibly a bandicoot on E. Collected by F. M. Setzler.

(3) The Log Gongs

172 Two log gongs were collected in Arnhem Land, one (Pl. 147A, C) called
534 *uvar*, by F. M. Setzler and F. D. McCarthy, whilst engaged on archaeological research at Milingimbi, and one (Pl. 147D) called *ubara*, by myself, at Oenpelli.

Warner, when carrying out research among the aborigines of Milingimbi
796 during 1927-8, saw the log gong in use and gives a full description of its
534 function.[22] According to him, the gong, which is beaten with a frayed section of pandanus root, is used only in the *ulmark* cycle of ceremonies. When the women hear the sound of the gong, which they believe is the voice of the serpent
[789] *muit*,[23] they assemble in the camp and continuously repeat the call, *kait-bo*. This call protects the women from harm, it being the same as that used by the

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[20] For shape of a *jiritja* paddle, Fig. 58A, B.

[21] Bark painting of south-east wind, Pl. 24D.

[22] Warner (1937), pp. 315-16.

[23] Another name for *jurlungur*, the mythical serpent, who swallowed the *Wawalik* sisters, see myth, p. 278, and Warner (1937), p. 372).

[text continues on p. 456]

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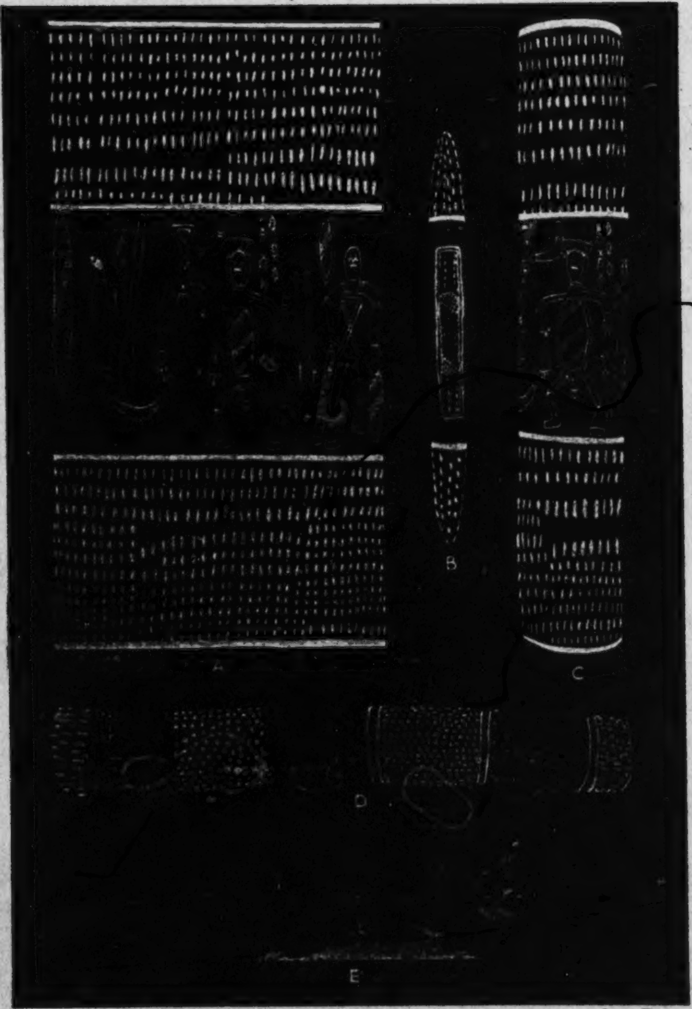

Jean Truran

PLATE 147. Log gongs, Milingimbi and Oenpelli

A, C Log gong, Milingimbi
D Log gong, Oenpelli
B Ceremonial object, Milingimbi
E Method of holding log gong, Oenpelli

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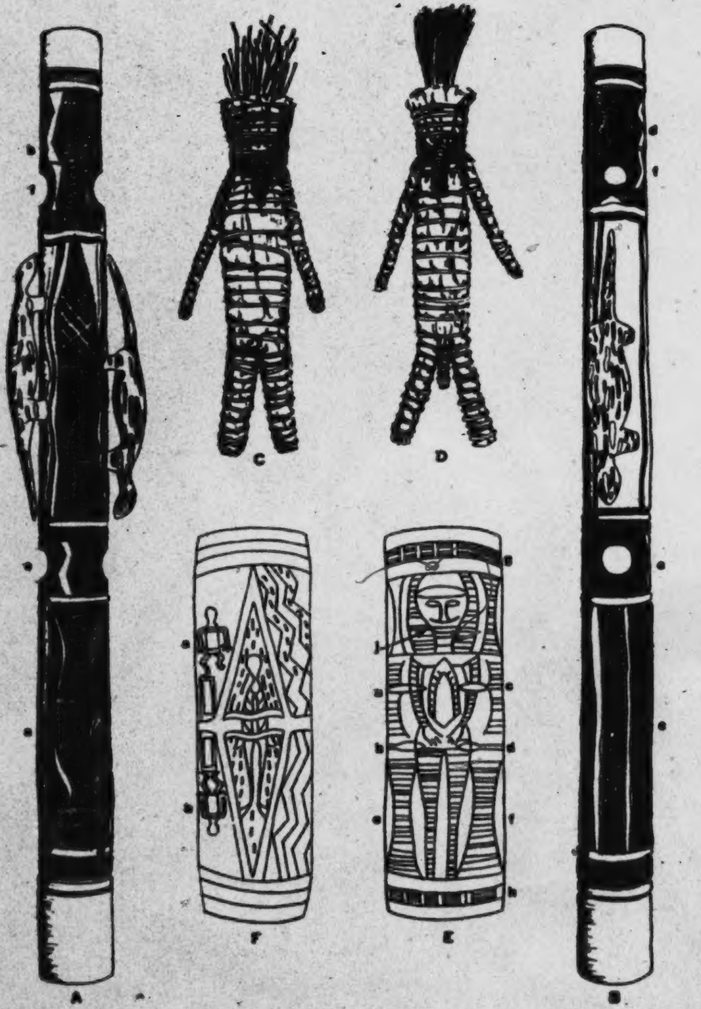

Rosemary Dunnett

FIG. 65. Ceremonial message sticks and bark figures, Yirrkalla
A, B The night-bird, karawak, and the opossum, marungo C, D Bunbulama and Wuluwait
E, F The sun, Bama-bama

SACRED FIGURES OF ANCESTRAL BEINGS OF ARNHEM LAND.

By R. M. Berndt and C. H. Berndt

THIS paper consists of brief notes recording ten carved human figures from Yirrkalla in north-eastern Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of Australia, obtained during recent anthropological field-work (1946-47) in that region. They are part of a unique series of 51 human figures carved by aboriginal men,[1] all of indigenous inspiration and execution. Like sacred and secular ritual objects of a conventionalized type in other parts of aboriginal Australia, they have a very definite place in the social life of the natives. 532 778

The figures collected belong to seven groups, and may be divided into secular and sacred objects, as follows :

Sacred :

Group 1. Major Ancestral Beings.
" 2. Minor Ancestral Beings and Spirits.
" 3. Secular Figures bearing sacred totemic designs.

Secular :

Group 4. Figures based on Macassan burial posts and representations of Macassans ; these are known as *'wurʔmu* or "Collection Men" and are associated especially with certain secular camp ceremonies. [177]
" 5. 'Baijini, or figures based on pre-Macassan contact—these are related to the *'wurʔmu* (4).
" 6. 'Ba:du Spirits—being figures of Spirit Men and Women from the Torres Strait Islands.
" 7. 'Wura:tila:gu or Groote Eylandt Woman's Spirit—which has some bearing on woman's life.

A paper on groups 4 and 5 has been prepared for publication, in which eight *'wurʔmu* and five *'Baijini* figures have been briefly described. In this article we discuss Group I, which contains the most sacred representatives of the Ancestral Beings of this region, and also Group 2, the Minor Ancestral Beings and Spirits, which play a subsidiary part in sacred ritual, mythology and song cycles.

It is not possible, in such a limited space, to describe in detail the ritual associated with each figure, and its complex background : each sacred representation of a 800

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[1] These are kept in the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University, on behalf of the Australian National Research Council, under whose auspices the writers have worked for some years.

[p. 309]

and sacred songs, in trade, in fighting, and among material objects. And some alien 177
strain is observable in their physical make-up. In spite of this, however, they retain the fundamental basis of the aboriginal culture.

Since wood-carving of the type to be described here is not normally found in 177
other parts of Australia, it is probable that the design and manufacture were introduced at some early date from Indonesia. Native informants themselves state 532
definitely that these are of indigenous inspiration; and since most of the human figures represented in Groups 1, 2 and 3 are so intimately connected with the mythology and song-life, and since even the most sacred Ancestral Beings are carved and used in ritual, their statement is difficult to refute. On the other hand, figures of Groups 4, 5 and 6 are more or less definitely associated with alien contact, as are their songs and ceremonies. It is therefore a matter of hypothesis whether the figures of sacred intent were sponsored by the Macassan and '*Baijini*-inspired 'wurɔmu and dancing objects.

Their Manufacture.

All carvings, secular or sacred, are made by initiated men, working in a special 532
camp. When the figures are required, at the advent of seasonal ceremonies, a craftsman employs at least two men to cut and trim the required posts. When these have been cut to size, and the bark removed, the artist begins to chip skilfully with a [412]
knife or "shovel-nosed" blade,[7] until it takes the shape he requires. He works on this for several days, carving in the details and scraping it smooth with a knife blade, rough stone or piece of shark's skin "sand" paper.[8] It is essential that the body should be smooth, since upon its surface the sacred totemic or clan designs are painted.

This done, he smears the whole figure with red ochre as groundwork for the 532
design, and also to signify ritually that it represents a spirit being in human form. 778
But at this stage, the actual figure has no distinct personality—it is simply a piece of wood shaped like a human being. It is after the painting of the pattern upon its body, face and legs that it becomes imbued with personality, and reaches the status of a sacred being: it is then a symbol of some particular Ancestral Being immortalized in song, mythology and ritual.

The totemic painting is the most important part of its whole manufacture, 532
requiring hours of patient attention, the colours being mixed and ground on stones, and applied with a thin human-hair, bamboo-grass-root or pandanus-cone hair brush. When the figure is ready, it goes to a sacred storehouse to await the ritual showing.

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[7] The iron bladed "shovel-nosed" spear is common to this region. Iron was introduced by [177]
Indonesian visitors, but never in any great quantity, so that stone axes, adzes and knives were freely used until recent years.

[8] This is mounted on a piece of wood, and used in much the same way as emery paper.

Group I

The Sacred Figures and Their Background.

532 616 778 The figures under discussion here belong to both moieties. The *'Wauwəlak* Sisters[9] are *'du:a*—the more conservative of the two moieties, while *'Laintʃuŋ* and *'Banaitʃa* are *'jiritʃa*—the moiety that concerns itself to a great extent with introduced beliefs and customs.

776 173 The *'Wauwəlak* are two " Dreaming "[10] Sisters, associated with the *'dʒuŋgəwən*, *'kunapipi* and *'gu:rlma:k* ceremonies, which are age-grading and seasonal festivals of the *'du:a 'ŋa:ra* (i.e. " shade " or shelter).[11] Their mythology and their song cycle are preoccupied with after-birth blood, with menstruation, and with giant rock pythons, by one of whom they are swallowed. Although they themselves are looked on as Fertility Mothers,[12] they were originally brought into being by the *'Dʒaŋgəwəl*, the most important of all the Ancestral Beings, who were responsible for the peopling of this coast with the predecessors of the present-day aborigines, and for creating all natural resources. The *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* Sisters, *'Maralaitʃ* and *'Pildʒiŋburərɔiju*, and *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* himself, travelled from the mythical land of *Bɔ'ralku*, bringing with them the sacred *'raŋga* objects used in the sacred rituals, in addition to the ceremonies mentioned above. Unfortunately, although carved figures of the *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* are occasionally made, none were used during our period of field work, although all their rituals were observed.

173 Briefly then, the two *'Wauwəlak* Sisters (one younger than the other) came from *'Mu:ruwəl* waterhole, in the " Bush " on the mainland below Milingimbi. The elder sister was pregnant, and eventually gave birth to a child ; the after-birth blood was still running as she walked along near this place, accompanied by her sister and carrying the baby. They arrived at a deep well, near which they camped.

A large rock python, living in this well, smelt the blood ; he came out and sprayed out water like rain. The elder sister told the other to make a bark hut, and by the time this was erected, it was dark. The snake then made vivid flashes of lightning, but the Sisters were unaware that this was his doing. Then the snake came out of the waterhole and on to the bank, and slowly moved towards the sisters. When the women saw him coming, the younger sister got up, and began to dance to keep him away. When she was tired, she called to her sister, who then began to dance in her turn. But as the snake still came on, the elder sister called out, " Come on, sister. It's no good for me—my blood is coming out, and he can smell it and he's coming closer." So the younger sister danced. When she was tired the elder sister

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[114] [9] L. Warner (*op. cit.* p. 248 *et seq.*) has given a description of the mythology and ritual of the " Wawilak " Sisters. The version given in this paper differs slightly from this.

[10] Cf. the concept of the " Eternal Dreamtime." Their reality is in the past, but their spirit is eternal.

[778] [11] Each moiety has a sacred shelter during its ceremonies, adjacent to the dancing ground.

[12] The concept of the Fertility Mother is common in Northern Territory of Australia : *vide* R. and C. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, MS. book for publication.

danced again, and the snake came closer. In fear the two sisters retired to their hut, 773
and the monstrous snake coiled around it and put his head through the opening.
He sprayed water over them, so that they became slippery and soft for swallowing;
then he proceeded to swallow the baby, the mother and finally the younger sister.

This is of course only the main theme; the original version and song cycle is very long and detailed, and instead of the blood from after-birth, it is menstruation blood that attracts the snake.

The *'Wauwəlak* myth and sacred songs are known to both men and women, but 773
the ritual and part of the ceremony is for men only, and is held away from the camp.[13]
However, certain associated ceremonies (e.g. the *'dʒuŋgəwən*) are performed in the 533
main camp, where conventionalized posts are placed to symbolize the *'Wauwəlak* 562
Sisters, around which women dance. In the north-eastern corner of Arnhem Land, as in other parts along the coast, women are acquainted with much of the sacred life, but may not discuss it. It is said that they originally monopolized all sacred ritual and dogma, and relinquished this right only when their ceremonial objects were stolen by the men. There is also an "outside" or secular song-cycle dealing with the ordinary adventures of these two sisters, which is sung in the camp and to which women dance.

But the carved figures illustrated here are used as *'raŋga* objects, in the same 196
way as the sacred *'maraiin* painted and feathered-string-decorated poles of *'Dʒaŋgəwəl*.
These are kept in a temporary storehouse out near the dancing ground, and shown to 778
fully initiated men.[14] The original artist who has made the figure enters the hut; 533
outside, the postulants are sitting or standing with faces turned away. The song-man begins to clap his sticks and the others are led up to look upon the sacred object. Finally, when the singing is completed, the designs on the figure are explained and discussed. At times, during the showing of the object, the figure may be held ritually by an actor who writhes on the ground like the python who swallowed the sisters.

What the *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* is to the *'duːa*, *'Laintʃuŋ*[15] is to the *'jiritʃa*: he is the most 776
important of all the *'jiritʃa* Ancestral Beings, and is highly sacred. He came out of 616
the sea, emerging from the waters like a giant stone from the receding tide, at
'Duːwən'miliŋwu, near Blue Mud Bay. His body bore variegated water-marks 773
(*'raːŋ*) that formed patterns. In the figure illustrated, the totemic designs (belonging 532
to a number of *'jiritʃa* clans) painted on its body are water-mark patterns.

Now *'Barəma*,[16] a *'jiritʃa* man, saw *'Laintʃuŋ* for the first time as he stood on the 773
beach, leaning on a sacred *'raŋga* yam stick, and was surprised to observe these
watermarks.

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[13] This with many details is an enactment of the above myth; i.e. in the *'dʒuŋgəwən* and *'kunapipi*.

[14] Those who have gone through the *'Dʒaŋgəwəl* rituals.

[15] The name *'Laintʃuŋ* means "white cloud from the sea," signified by the white face in the figure illustrated.

[16] Called also *'Bilmələndʒi*, derived from sacred beating sticks (called *'bilma*).

173 " I am *'Laintʃuŋ,"* said the Ancestral Being. " I bring all the *'jiritʃa* dreaming and painting: these will belong to you people, no matter what language and what tribe." Then he gave to *'Barɔma* the sacred paintings and the *'raŋga*, so that the totemic designs were distributed among the clans.

The two men then ritually called out (i.e. *'bilkaju:n*), so that all the people could come and learn what had happened. When they had all arrived, sacred dancing took place, paintings were drawn and their meanings were explained. *'Laintʃuŋ's* voice went to all the *'jiritʃa* clans, and his law became established.

Eventually, he turned himself into a paper-bark tree, and his son *'Banaitʃa*[17] took his place. Now *'Banaitʃa* was a great religious leader, who was able to elaborate on the ritual and dogma laid down in the beginning by *'Laintʃuŋ*, his father. He began to teach men, but his disciples became frightened and talked among themselves. " Is this man really connected with *'Laintʃuŋ*, as a son, as he says? What have we got to do? " And they climbed trees with their spears, and waiting for an opportunity speared him so that he died. This was in the *'Bunɔraithi* country at Blue Mud Bay.

But when they had killed him, the murderers realized that *'Banaitʃa* was really a great man, and had had a great deal more to tell them; and they were " sorry." So in memory of him they carved his representation, and also made a paper-bark *'banaitʃa* pad which is beaten on the ground during sacred rituals; and the sound of this is *'Banaitʃa's* voice.[18]

196 118 The carved figures of both *'Laintʃuŋ* and *'Banaitʃa* are shown to postulants in the same way as are the *'Wauwɔlak* figures; but this *'jiritʃa* ritual is at no time associated with secular ceremonies, or with song-cycles sung in the main camp.

The 'Wauwɔlak Figures.

118 *Plate I, Figure* 1. The younger *'Wauwɔlak* sister, who danced to keep away the large python that eventually swallowed the two sisters and the child.

532 The treatment of this figure's face is peculiar to *'du:a* craftsmen of the old school, and is used only in relation to the *'Wauwɔlak* and *'Dzaŋgɔwɔl*. The carving of the majority of these sacred figures, both *'du:a* and *'jiritʃa* (excluding Figure 6), is distinctive, and differs from the treatment of figures belonging to the other groups. The sacred designs are applied directly to a background of red ochre. The breasts are those of a young girl, while the ridge between them is a cicatrization. Arms are carved solidly to the trunk of the figure, while vulva and buttocks are raised from the background and are not patterned. The whole is painted in red, white, black and yellow. The figure wears around its head a *'bulkɔwalku* ornament, and on its body a

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[17] I.e. a part of the paper-bark tree; also associated with a giant barramundi fish.

[18] The complete ritual, songs and sacred objects associated with *'Laintʃuŋ* and *'Banaitʃa* will be discussed at a later date. Representations of *'Laintʃuŋ-'Banaitʃa* objects and paper-bark beaters are held at the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University, for the Australian National Research Council.

The figure wears around its head a "bulkowalku ornament, and on its body a 'maitga, the red-ochred jungle-string girdle which young girls often wear for decoration and for "strengthening" the breasts. A string pubic apron (*'mudpu*) is also worn, but more for decoration than for actual covering.

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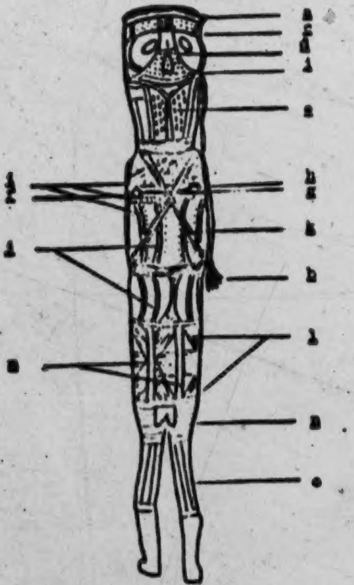

Text-figure A.

The text-figure A, which is a rough sketch of the *'Wauwalak* figure in Plate 1, figure 1, is a guide to the meaning of the pattern.

a *'bulkowalku* head ornament, made of jungle-string fibre into which have been woven seagull down and parakeet feathers; the terminating pendant (*b*) is of wild-honey wax and seagull feathers.
c the head-band, called *'marapipi*, *'kalamba*, or *'warambala*.
d *'gu:lgul*, outline of cheek or groove between nose and eye.
e the *'dayara* flower of the *'du:rilji* gum tree, associated with the *'Wauwalak* in the song cycles.
f small swelling breasts, *'diliyin'wirlkul*.
g breast or chest ridge, *'gumul* or *'kalmalki*.
h cicatrization.
i small scars called *'hapu:wa:pa*, or "water painting," from the rain made by the python (see myth).

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●778 *j* *'kunja:lili* boomerang, which is not used but is simply a pattern; this is the small one associated with the whale.

k the *'maitga* girdle.

l menstruation blood flowing inside the young sister's body; it flows around her navel from the breasts and enters her uterus (*m*), where it is stored, and finally escapes at the menstrual period.

n cuts on the upper thighs or buttocks, signifying the circumcision of her husband.

o menstruation blood running down her legs.

The designs on the back of the figure are similar to those on the front; on the arms are other marks, signifying cuts for her brother's circumcision, and dots which are *'du:ritji* flowers.

773 An addition to the abovementioned myth tells how the younger sister danced forward to meet her older sister after the birth of her child. As soon as the younger entered the hut (branch shelter) in which the mother and child were living, she felt her menstrual pains; the blood was flowing from breasts to navel and thence to her uterus, and then began to flow in the normal way as she sat down. In this case, it is said, the menstrual blood was brought to flow sooner than she had expected, because of the girl's energetic dancing and the movement of her hips and buttocks.

532 Artist: *'Mauwu:lan*, headman of the *'Ri:rədʒiyu 'mala, 'du:a.*

778 Full length, 32 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 8 inches; width of shoulders, 4·5 inches; diameter of head, 4 inches.

Plate I, Figure 2. The *'Wauwəlak* Sister. This well-made figure is similar in design to the younger sister (as above, figure 1), but the pattern is first incised on a red-ochred background and finally painted in black, yellow and white. Arms are standing out from the trunk of the body, and the breasts are elongated to signify "fallen milks," by which term they are known, i.e. full and pendulous breasts.

There is a little variation in the meaning of the designs. Horizontal lines between and above the breasts are cicatrizations, while the cut immediately beneath is said to keep the breasts from falling too far, and to stop the milk in them from flowing back towards the navel and into the uterus and out through the vagina with the after-birth blood. Marks on the shoulders are *'galmakit*, for a brother's circumcision; while dots on the chest are *'kapu:wa:pa* or scars, signifying the rain sent by the python.

The design on the back of the figure, similar to that on the front, represents blood flowing from about the vertebræ above the buttocks to the lower ribs and thence to the navel (surrounding marks signifying flowing blood are *'mimpu*) and to the uterus, and out through the vagina. The latter is painted red, like the blood. This is the blood from after-birth. The belief that the blood flows from the back, is said to have its foundation in menstrual pains in that region, and pains in the same place when giving birth to a child; e.g. the midwife presses and massages the back of a woman at an impending birth, and as the child is born.

Blood is taken from the vagina and smeared on the *'Wauwəlak's* head-band; 532 this is represented on the back of the head, and by the dots on the forehead. It 778 should also be smeared on the feathered head ornament (as in figure 1), which is missing from this figure.

Artist: *'Mauwu:lan*, as above.

Full length, 36 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 8 inches; width of shoulders, 5 inches; diameter of head, 4·5 inches.

The 'Laintʃuŋ-'Banaitʃa Figures.

Plate I, Figure 3. This remarkably fine and unusual figure of the Ancestral Being, *'Laintʃuŋ*, is unique in its treatment, remarkably well executed, and of high æsthetic value. Along with the *'Wauwəlak* sisters and the *'Banaitʃa* (i.e. Figure 4), it is one of the most important carvings, and is a definite revelation of the heights to which aboriginal sacred art can obtain.

Like all these carvings, it loses something in its photographic representation; the natural colours of red, black, white and yellow give to the originals a "life" and movement that is difficult and almost impossible to translate in words or line-drawing. To see these figures in their own environment, invested with their sacred value, surrounded by postulants, amid the chanting of songs, is an experience which is outstanding and important in the life of the observer.

The *'Laintʃuŋ* figure has arms carved out from the main trunk of its body, and shows the usual fundamental colours of white, black, red and yellow. The front of the head to the chin is painted white, while the back is left red-ochred. The top of the head is flat and has human hair, fastened on with blood. At each corner of the mouth are parakeet[19] feathers, bunched together with "sugar-bag" (wild honey) wax and stuck into the wood; this suggests a moustache—the upper lip being bare of hair, with long tufts left at each side between the lips and cheeks.[20] A feathered ornament extending from the chin, and jutting outwards to a point below the shoulders, represents a beard. The first bunch of feathers is from the parakeet, and the second seagull feathers; each is held together by a base of "sugar-bag" wax, while the latter is painted white. Feathers are tied to the end of its beard in ritual, and are called *'raŋga:r* (not *'raŋga*). The figure wears the red-ochred head band with white ochre and vertical lines, called *'kalamba*, that is used only for dancing. 302 A red-ochred band extends from ear to ear, across the nose; this is the usual facial decoration, called *'ənəbi*, used when dancing in sacred ceremonies. On its left arm the figure wears a parakeet-feathered armband, called *'ju:tə*. This figure should also have a *'mindʒalpi* dancing dilly bag strung around its neck; but the original is missing.

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[19] From the sacred *'lindəri:tʃ* bird, whose feathers are in great demand, used for making 237 feathered string objects and in adorning *'raŋga*.

[20] Feathers are tied to the tips of a moustache, as a beard, in ceremony.

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The body of this figure, both front and back, is painted with the sacred totemic patterns (originally from watermarks) that *'Laintʃuŋ* distributed to the various *'jiritʃa* clans. In order to differentiate between these designs, the accompanying rough sketch is provided (text-figure B).

Front of Figure.

a *'Dalwɔŋu*, being a freshwater weed design: diamond design red-ochred, edged with white and yellow, the rest white. *'Laintʃuŋ* sent this design to *'Grmentʃu:lilji* at the top of Blue Mud Bay, where it was taken by the *'Dalwɔŋu*-speaking group.

b *'Dalwɔŋu-'Madarlpa* (joined): black irregular bands, rest yellow and white.

c *'Madarlpa* (as apart from *'Dalwɔŋu*). *'Laintʃuŋ* sent this to the *'Madarlpa* people at *Bɔ'raldʒa*, near Blue Mud Bay; the design is fire or ashes inside seaweed and mud: black irregular bands, the rest white and yellow.

d *'Ri:tarŋu-'Wɔnguri-'Maŋga:lilji* (joined). This design came to *'Druru:lapə* near Blue Mud Bay, and symbolized a hollow log under the water. (Same colouring as above.)

e *'Gumaitʃ:* at same locality near Blue Mud Bay. Red-ochre, and cliff design. (Same colouring as above.)

f *'Gumaitʃ:* design is bark ready to be stripped, and looking down between the cleavage of the bark from the trunk of the tree. (Same colouring as above.)

g *'Wɔnguri: 'milka*, mangrove worm, coloured white. This is associated with the log design of *d*, which is rotten, being riddled with this worm (*g*).

h *'Ri:tarŋu-'Wɔnguri* (joined): spring-water running at *'Wu:ru:lmal* (yellow, red and white).

i Continuation of *'Maŋga:lilji* design (*d*). (Colouring as *h*.)

j *'Manaitʃa:* white dots are honey-bees, and the diamond-shaped designs are the honeycomb (white, edged with yellow).

k *'Gumaitʃ-'Ri:tarŋu* at *'Bilmalandʒi*; white dots are honey bees, and black dots symbolize fire (ashes); the diamond-shaped designs are honeycomb (white, edged with yellow).

l *'Gumaitʃ-'Ri:tarŋu* at *'Deiwɔru:* meaning of design similar to *k* (same colouring as above).

m white, as is the whole face.

n head band; red-ochre, with white vertical stripes.

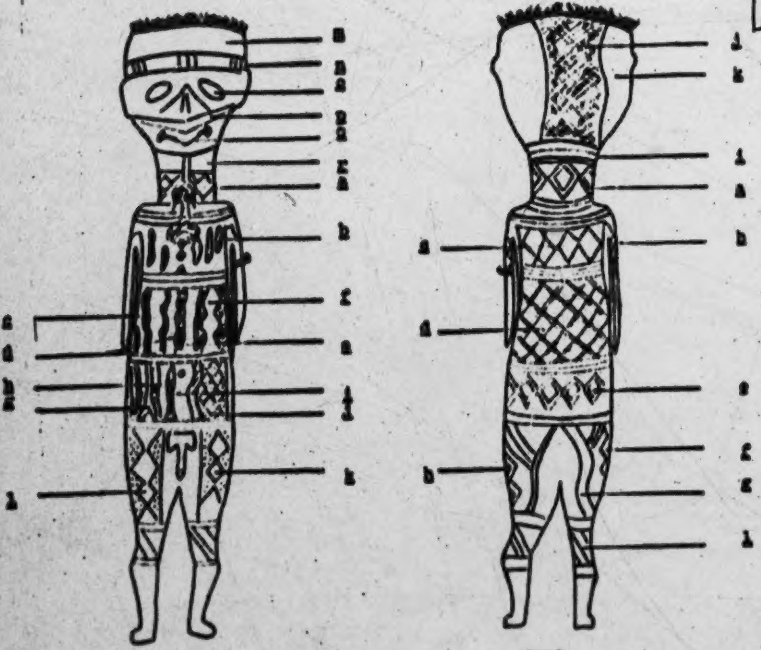
o red-ochred eyes, black pupil.

p red-ochred facial mark.

q inside of mouth, red-ochred.

r red, yellow, white bands.

It should be mentioned that originally the *'milka* (*g*) belonged to the *'Mayga:lilji* speaking group; but this big log, *'hadauwalk* (see *d*) "said he was in the wrong place: he had become rotten from lying in fresh water." He (i.e. the log) left that place and, travelling under the ground, came out at *'Druru:lapə* at Arnhem Bay (named after *'Druru:lapə* at Blue Mud Bay) with the *'milka* inside; the latter was alive because it came out in salt water. The log (which is used as a sacred object) went



front

back

Text-figure B.

on, coming out from the ground at *'Danagalpi* (below *'Druru:lapə*); later it went on to *'Kanbaldyi* (on the mainland opposite Elcho Island), and then on to *'Mi:lowe* (near Milingimbi), so that now all these places from Blue Mud Bay to Milingimbi are ritually connected through the *'jiritja* clans.

On the other hand, the *'Madaripa*-speaking people have fire dreaming; this fire came from burning stringy-bark, which extended through the *'Manäitja* territory where the honey and bees were (*j*), and on to the *'Gumaitj*; from there to the *'Ri:taryu*, *'Bilhilji*, *'Ku:pəpigu* and *'Warəməri*. It was from there that a small bird took a

113 burning twig and flew with it to the salt water. In reference to designs *h* and *l*, it is said that the honey bee made fire in every direction—so that the bee and honey design joins with the fire.[31]

532 *Back of Figure.*

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- *a* *'Dalwɔŋu* design; see above: diamond-shaped design red-ochred, edged with white and yellow.
- *b* *'Dalwɔŋu* design on arms.
- *c* "bottom *'Dalwɔŋu*" design: diamond design edged with yellow, filled in with white stripes.
- *d* *'Ŋelkala:* ordinary honey design; no fire or honey bee: black, yellow, red and white colouring.
- *e* *'Bilkilji:* freshwater long-necked turtle design, which has water-weed under its shell: it is for this reason that it is associated with the *'Dalwɔŋu* (see front of figure design, *a*): diamond designs filled in with red-ochre, edged with yellow and white; rest white.
- *f* on side of thighs: *'Bilkilji-'Ku:pɔpiŋu* (joined), as *c*.
- *g* water-marks on body, yellow and white.
- *h* on left side of thigh: *'Deiwəru-'Bilkilji* (joined), as *c*.
- *i* yellow band edged with white.
- *j* red-ochred.
- *k* white, continuation from front of figure.
- *l* white strokes.

In the painting of this figure the totemic designs of the *'Laməmɔri*, actual *'Warəmɔri*, and *'Makálranalmɔri* were omitted, because the headmen of these groups were absent.

Artists: *'Li:əgə'raŋ, 'Dalwɔŋu*; and *'Muŋgərawi, 'Gumaitʃ: 'jiritʃa 'mata.*

Full length, 36·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 10 inches; length of beard, 6 inches; diameter of head, 5·25 inches; width across shoulders, 5·5 inches.

Plate I, Figure 4. 'Banaitʃa, the son of *'Laintʃuŋ*. This is also a remarkable piece of carving, unlike any of the other figures. A massive neck supports a comparatively small head with a contemplative expression, whereas that of the *'Laintʃuŋ* is almost enigmatic. Except for the chest design, the figure is completely red-ochred—which makes it more difficult to photograph. Particularly noticeable is the carving of the protruding buttocks and the delicately shaped legs. Arms are well set from the main trunk of the body; elbows, but not hands, are shown.

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[31] Long and elaborate myths and songs describe and explain these totemic clan designs that *'Laintʃuŋ* distributed. These will be discussed later. Large collections of bark drawings also present and describe the sacred designs, as does a large collection of brown paper drawings, all in the possession of the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University, and of the writers.

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The design on the body and at the back, in yellow, red, white and black, symbolizes stringy-bark, and is associated with the *'Manaitʃa* and the *'Dalwɔŋu* speaking people at Blue Mud Bay.

Artists: *'Li:ŋgə'raŋ, 'Dalwɔŋu; 'Muŋgəraui, 'Gumaitʃ,* and *'Dʒimba:jun, 'Makalraŋalmɔri: 'jiritʃa'mala.*

Full length, 42·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 12 inches; length of neck, 6·5 inches; diameter of head, 5·5 inches; width across shoulders, 6·5 inches.

Plate I, Figure 5. *'Banaitʃa.* This is a well carved figure, but not with the details shown in Figures 3 and 4. Head, neck and shoulders are painted black; the face itself is white to the upper lip; this symbolizes the *'bulumbu:l* or white foam watermark, and the black colouring represents the dark skin colouring of a native, termed *'mɔ:l.* A yellow band attached at each end to thin white bands is the *'kalambu* head-band. Eyes are fringed with yellow, with a pupil of white. A facial band, drawn on the skin, is represented by white bands around the chin and extending along the jaw around the back of the head. Arms are carved solidly on to the trunk of the figure, and fingers are outlined; the penis is painted yellow, and its apex white, the testes also are white. Legs are red-ochred to the knees, and the rest left plain.

The sketch (text-figure C) describes the designs.

Front of Figure.

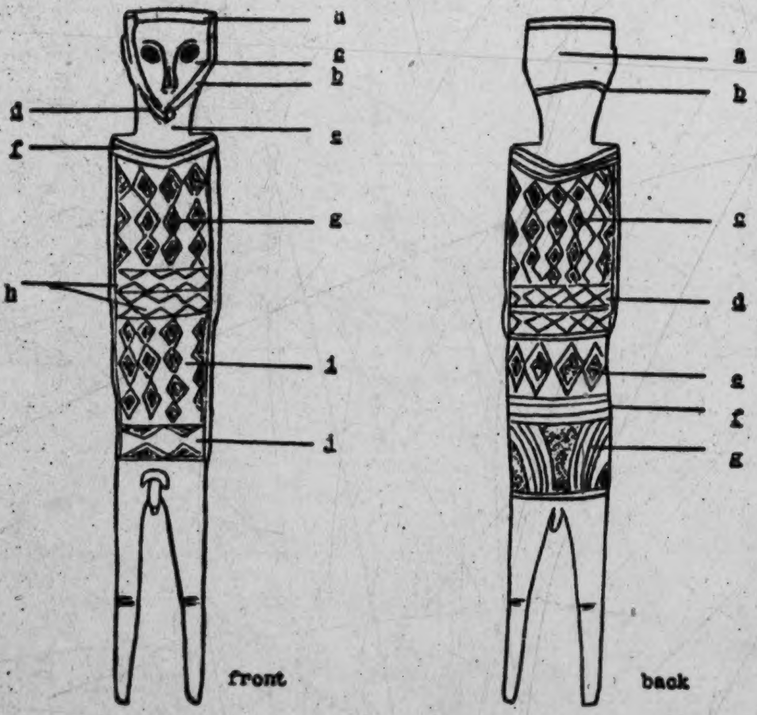
a yellow band.
b black.
c white water-mark.
d white facial bands.
e black neck.
f yellow, red and white bands.
g *'Dalwɔŋu* pattern; this design is copied from the place where *'Laintʃuŋ* emerged; it symbolizes spring water on the beach: first row of diamond designs is black, the second red, third black, fourth red, other colouring white and yellow.
h *'Dalwɔŋu* design: salt water mixing with the fresh water (called "taste together"), i.e. top row of diamond designs is fresh water, the bottom row salt water.
i salt water, divided from fresh spring water (*g*) by *h*. *'Dalwɔŋu.*
j as *h*, water running across.

Back of Figure.

a black.
b white band continued from front of face.
c as *g* in front of figure: band of black, red diamond design; black, red, white criss-cross, and black band—the rest white, red and yellow.

532
778

d water flowing across: first row of diamond designs, filled in with red and white, second row filled in with white.
e salt water: diamond design filled in with red.
f white, red and yellow bands.
g sea-weed in red, yellow and white on a background of black.



Text-figure C.

[173] *'Banaitja* was apparently first in the *'Dalwoŋu*[illegible] territory, and gave to people of this language group three lots of special totemic paintings, and not just one, as in the case of the other groups. Hence the *'Dalwoŋu* have a prior right over *'Banaitja* rituals.

Artist: *'Li:əgə'ray*, as above.

[illegible] Seaside "bottom" *'Dalwɔŋu*.

Full length, 33·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 6·25 inches; 532
diameter of head, 5·25 inches; width at shoulders, 4·5 inches. 778

Plate I, Figure 6. The final figure of this group is a representation of a *'Banaitʃa* 532
female. Very little of these women is mentioned in the sacred mythology, but songs
do refer to sisters of *'Banaitʃa*. This figure is in the likeness of *'Laintʃuŋ's* daughter 778
at a place called *'Gu:lɔldʒi* in the *'Dalwɔŋu* country. Her special name is *'Barama*, 773
while her sacred name is *'Bilwana*. She is also called *'Mundamunda*, from her body markings, representing bubbles rising to the surface of fresh water, and *'Mundalwaltun*, which refers to barramundi scales arising from the water.[23] This woman, unlike her father *'Laintʃuŋ*, always hides in the water and never emerges.

The figure is rather carelessly carved, and the designs are coloured yellow and 532
white on a red-ochred background, in the conventional manner. Both back and 778
front of this figure are patterned in the sacred *'Dalwɔŋu* clan design, representing bubbles arising from the water, and water-weed spreading across the surface of the water. The pupils of the eyes are painted black; while a yellow band across the forehead, with vertical white and red lines, is a headband, and other lines represent facial markings in yellow and white.

Artist: *'Li:ɔgɔ'raŋ*, as above.

Full length, 29·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 7·25 inches; diameter of head, 5 inches; width across shoulders, 5·5 inches.

GROUP 2

The Figures and Their Background.

Male and female *'Kultana*, each known by a variety of names,[24] are associated [776]
with the *'jiritʃa* conception of the Land of Spirits, to which human beings of this
moiety must go after death. The spirits of deceased *'du:a* moiety men and women, 616
irrespective of clan, travel to the fabulous country of *Bɔ'ralku*, the original home of 775
the Great Ancestral Beings, known as the *'Dʒaŋgɔwɔl*, who themselves brought into being the predecessors of the present aborigines.[25] Consistent with their less conservative ideas, the *'jiritʃa* home of the dead is located at *'Ba:du* (or Badu; i.e. Badu Island in the Torres Strait Islands group). It is there, in a land of running spring water, coconut palms, bread fruit, rice and light-skinned people who cut timber and live in stilted houses, that the spirit is said to find eventual repose.

[23] For *'Banaitʃa* is associated with the barramundi fish.

[24] The man is called also *'Ranjiranji*, *'Ŋi:wunba*, *'Ma:ldʒidʒi*, *'Wu:rimila*, *'Li:abalgulk*, *'Gɔ:ŋwaldʒuŋ*, *'Dʒu:pinŋa:ma*, *'Kawu:ŋɔ*, *'Dʒalba:ru*, *'Kundʒɔrɔl*, etc., as well as a number of subsidiary names referring to particular incidents in his existence, e.g. *'Da:ga:dʒi:njalwu:l* (looking around for stingray in the mangroves), *'Jiribuma* (scratching himself after being bitten by mosquitoes), *'Dʒi:mɔ:luŋɔ:rɔra* (coming out into the shallow water of a mangrove swamp, looking for stingray), etc., etc. His wife is also known as *'Wulciwuli*, *'Danbɔramɔ*, *'Munandilŋa*, *'Kɔ:ŋwɔ:raiŋun*, *'Lautrilautri*, *'Mu:rkandʒa*, *'Kɔ:ŋlilji'naŋɔ*, *'Kuruŋgur*, *'Malwuŋgitʃ*, *'Meiwada*, *'Dilmi:a*, *'Mara:waldʒiŋani* and *'Murandilŋɔ*, etc.

[25] *'Dʒaŋgɔwɔl* is associated with the concept of the Fertility Mother, which will be discussed in detail later.

776 *'Kultana* belongs to the *'Gumaitʃ'mata* (language) group near Port Bradshaw, but
this spirit and his wife seem to have other spheres of influence outside their home
775 territory. For example, *'Kultana* also lives on an island called *'Mɔ:dilya*, north of
the Wessells, and lights large fires of grass and " rubbish " to attract spirits of the
dead on their way to *'Ba:du*. The male *'Kultana*, when he is not supervising the
journeying spirits, hunts for stingray in the shallow waters of the mangrove swamps,
and scratches his mosquito bites; while his wife gathers wood, collects jungle-fowl
eggs, and generally spends her time in the jungles fringing the beach. There are no
actual ceremonies associated with these *'Kultana*, although there is some secular
533 mortuary dancing; but there are both sacred and camp songs related to their
adventures and general behaviour.

'Murɔru:ma is the " Turtle " Man from Bremer Island (at one time called Melville
776 Island), and is associated with *'du:a 'Ri:rɔdʒiŋu 'mata* secular and sacred life; he,
773 his wives and his sons, *'Daŋɔdʒi:ɔna* and *'Wuralwural*, are immortalized particularly
533 in an elaborate song cycle sung in the camp, while *'Murɔru:ma* himself plays only a
subsidiary part in the sacred songs. However, to the *'Ri:rɔdʒiŋu* speaking group he
is an important being, connected with the principal physical features of their country,
which is localized around Yirrkalla. The myth itself deals with his turtle hunting,
773 the murder of his *'jiritʃa 'Wɔŋguri* wife (he had other wives, belonging to the
'Lɔmɔmɔri, *'Warɔmɔri* and *'Gumaitʃ* speaking clans), and consequent feuds arising
from this killing. His wife was killed because she wished to have nothing to do
with her husband, refused his sexual attentions, and wanted to return to her own
country. He killed her by inserting his knife in her vagina, and slitting her upwards
to the throat. A revenge expedition on the part of the dead wife's family succeeded
in killing *'Murɔru:ma* at Melville Bay, on the mainland.

'Murɔru:ma's two sons, who were living at Bremer Island, came with their friends to the point of land opposite Bremer, near Yirrkalla; there they saw the spirit of *'Murɔru:ma*, but believing him to be a human being they were glad, as they had not heard of his death. Coming close to him, they saw him disappear; and looking out to sea they saw a big rock which they knew must be his spirit. They spoke among themselves, saying that they would avenge his death. The rest of the myth concerns several killings and other details too numerous to present here.

532 These carved figures, whether they be the realistic or conventionalized (i.e.
778 as the " post " figure, Plate I, Figure 4) representations, are used as *'raŋga* objects, in
much the same way as are the sacred (*'maraiin*) painted and feathered-string-decorated
796 poles of *'Dʒaŋgɔwɔl*, *'Laintʃuŋ*, *'Banaitʃa*, *'Wauwɔlak* etc. They are kept in a store-
house near the ritual dancing ground and shown to initiated men.[24] The original
artist who has made the figure enters the hut; outside, the postulants sit or stand
with averted heads. The song man begins to beat his sticks, and the others are led
up to look upon the sacred object. Finally, when the singing is completed, the

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[24] Those who have gone through a series of *'maraiin* ceremonies, but may not yet have been admitted to the viewing of certain sacred *'raŋga*.

designs on the figure are explained and discussed. There is no dancing with these, 778
as there is with the figures of the *'Wauwəlak-'Laintʃuŋ-'Banaitʃa* group. 796

The Figures.

Plate II, Figure 1. Female *'Kultana*. The body, face and part of the legs are 532
painted in vertical bands of red, black, yellow and white, which represent the rain 778
streaming down her body. She is sitting at *'Dʒu:ltunma:dʒi*, in the bush above Port Bradshaw in *'Gumaitʃ* country, engaged in sending the cold *'jiritʃa* winds. A fringe of "wild coffee" tree bark, stripped and made into fibre, is tied around her head, representing hair. There are no arms to the figure, while breasts and pubes are raised.

Artist: *'Muŋgəraui, 'Gumaitʃ 'mata, 'jiritʃa.*

Full length, 36·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 9·5 inches; diameter of head, 7·75 inches; width across shoulders, 6 inches.

Plate II, Figure 2. A male *'Kultana*. The decoration on the body and part of the legs is similar to that in Figure 1, but the face is painted with a head-band in black, white and yellow, and certain facial markings usually worn by this spirit. The vertical bands on his body also represent rain streaming down his body, as he walks through the shallow water spearing stingray. This is the best time to catch these fish, which come into the shallows along the coast when they hear the rain falling on the surface of the water. This *'Kultana* is at *'Jalkjalkdun* on the beach near Port Bradshaw in *'Gumaitʃ* country.

Artist: *'Muŋgəraui* (as above).

Full length, 33·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 10·25 inches; diameter of head, 4 inches; width across shoulders, 5 inches.

Plate II, Figure 3. *'Murəru:ma*, the Bremer Island "Turtle" Man.—The predominant colouring of the face is white and red, while the front of the body design is incised and painted in black, yellow, white and red: head-band and facial markings are drawn on the figure.

On the left-hand section of the design is *'Murəru:ma's* canoe (yellow, white and black), between black and yellow bands representing reefs. On the top right-hand side are rocks, near the mainland point opposite Bremer Island, while below are two "Moon" fish (*'manala*), one with yellow and white stripes and the other with black and white stripes; the black band on the side is another reef.

Below this design is a male green-backed turtle (white, red and black), with waves at each side (white, black and red bands). The top of the head is painted white to represent seagull excreta.

On the back of the figure's head are clouds (horizontal lines in yellow, red, black and white), while in the middle of two rows of vertically placed horizontal bars is a sacred "dilly-bag," called *'waraitʃwaraitʃ*. On the back, the middle section is incised and painted with two green-backed turtles—the top one a male, facing a female (both in yellow, black and white), and dragging seaweed (radiating horizontal

532 bands, in red, white, black and yellow). Vertical bands across the shoulders are
778 waves; at one side of the turtles is a row of *'ŋunda:ka* limpet shells, and on the opposite side a row of *'girəwitʃi*, common beach shells (cockles), in yellow, white, black and red.

Artist: *'Mauwu:lan, 'Ri:rədʒiŋu 'mala, 'du:a*, helped by *'Bunuŋgu, 'Gumaitʃ mala, 'jiritʃa*.

Full length, 27 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 8 inches; diameter of head, 5 inches; width across shoulders, 5 inches.

Plate II, Figure 4. *'Murəru:ma*, as a post, without realistically carved legs. The whole figure is incised and brilliantly painted in red, yellow, black and white. He wears a head-band representing clouds, and also has facial markings. Around his neck he wears his sacred *'waraitʃwaraitʃ*, "dilly bag," while the main design on the body represents clouds and rain. At the back of the head, clouds and rain are again drawn, while white clouds are on the shoulders and below (this is an intricately worked pattern in red, white, yellow and black); long vertical bands, plainly painted in red and yellow, are two spears associated with the Thunder Man (*'Bɔ:lŋu*), who is connected with the Bremer Island song cycle and mythology.

Artists: *'Mauwu:lan* and *'Bunuŋgu* (as above).

Full length, 31 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 7·25 inches; diameter of head, 3·5 inches; width across shoulders, 3·5 inches.

000 This paper records only certain sacred figures of major and minor ancestral beings, and makes available, as soon as possible after their discovery, some information on these north-eastern Arnhem Land human figures. No attempt is made to treat in detail their religious or secular significance, their abundant mythology and varied song cycles, or their importance to the individuals themselves. A full and comprehensive account of their significance requires a major work.

RONALD M. BERNDT.
CATHERINE H. BERNDT.

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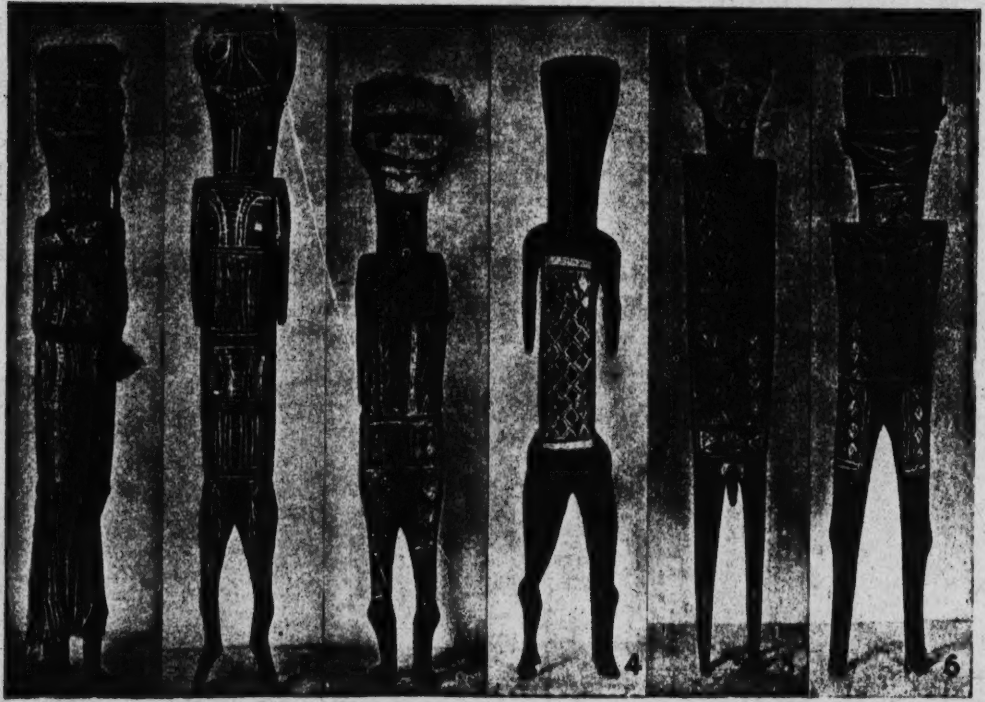
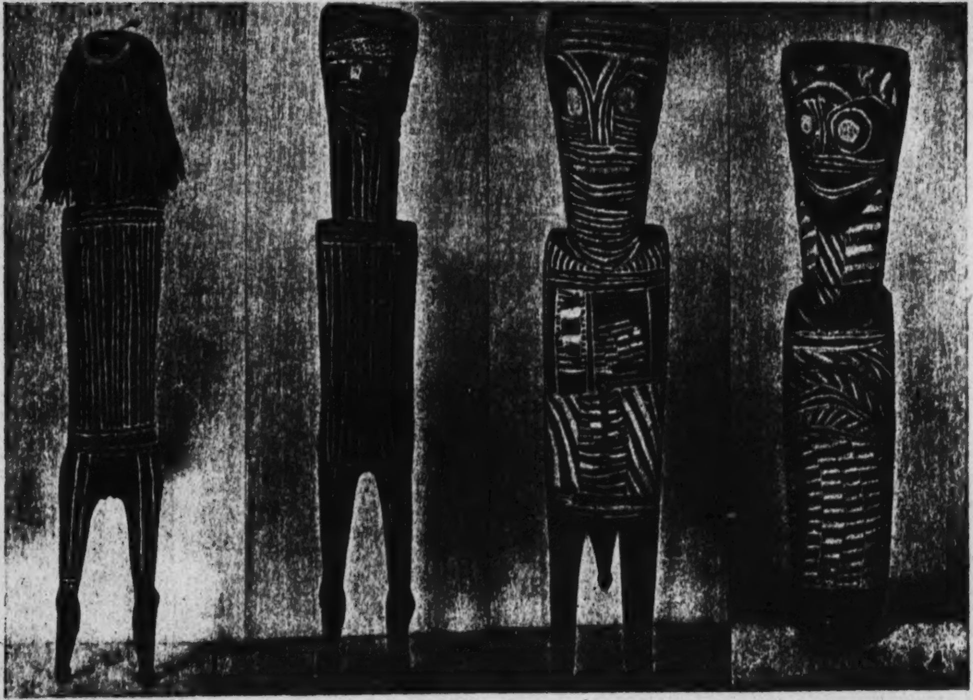
SACRED FIGURES OF ANCESTRAL BEINGS OF ARNHEM LAND. PLATE I

[p. 326 A]



1. *The younger 'Wauwəlak sister.* 2. *The elder 'Wauwəlak sister.* 3. *'Laintʃuŋ.* 4. *'Banaitʃa, of the massive neck.*
5. *'Banaitʃa, with the white foam water-marked face.* 6. *Sister of 'Banaitʃa.*

SACRED FIGURES OF ANCESTRAL BEINGS OF ARNHEM LAND. PLATE II



1. *Female 'Kullana, with fibre hair.* 2. *Male 'Kullana.* 3. *'Murəru:ma, the Bremer Island "Turtle" Man.* 4. *'Murəru:ma post figure*

Kumandjan woman's children will always belong to the Bulain 582
sub-section, and this order obtains right through the intermarriage 611
616
of the eight sub-sections of the tribe. 617

All the members of each sub-section, both male and female, 616
possess a definite relationship to some particular bird or animal, 617
which constitutes their class totem or "jungoin." This form of totemism is but poorly developed, and any mature person, after passing through a brief ceremony, may freely kill and eat his or her totem animal. (See page 16.)

In this area the distinctive feature of the tribal organisation 614
is the emphasis placed on the local hordes or clans, which are of 621
great number, and in some cases contain but few individuals. 778
Each horde consists of men of one moiety only, with their wives of the opposite moiety, and each horde possesses a definitely defined territory, which in every case includes a ceremonial totemic centre. This ceremonial totemism is, in contrast to the class totemism, very highly developed, and is of the utmost significance and importance.

These ceremonial totems, which are very numerous, in the 532
vast majority of cases consist of— 778

(a) Representations of utensils and implements believed to have been originated, used and conferred upon the people by certain mythological ancestors.

(b) Representations of natural species associated in legend with these ancestors.

(c) Representations of these mythological ancestors themselves.

All of these are highly conventionalised in design.

These "Muraian," as they are called, lie at the basis of most 614
of the ceremonial life of the people. They are most jealously 778
guarded, and are believed to exercise a profound influence on the fortunes of the clan. The revelation of and the explanation of these "Muraian" constitute one of the most important stages in the education of the young men.

During the "Nara" ceremonies, which are associated with 796
these "Muraian," the initiates have impressed upon them the ancient 867
tribal regulations and sanctions. They are warned against being insolent to their elders, against dishonesty, against lying, against improper relations with women, and so are enforced many excellent ethical lessons. During their period of instruction they
are placed under a food tabu, and are informed that any breach [784]
of the regulations taught will result in illness or deformity.

778 The aid of these "Muraian," in which are believed to reside the spirits of their tribal ancestors, may be invoked, and I have heard an old man, addressing a group of initiates, declare that he had lived to an old age because he had been true to his "Muraian," which, he said, had protected him from his enemies and generally cared for him. One man told me that when away out at sea in his canoe, and being suddenly overtaken by a violent storm, he had called upon his "Muraian," and by their aid had been brought safely to land.

614 During the preparations for, or the holding of, these
621 ceremonies,^ it is expected that all matters likely to disturb the
688 peace will be carefully avoided. If someone commits an offence
796 during that period it is regarded as an insult to the particular
[778] "Muraian" concerned, and the men of the horde become most
violently angry. In such a case the offender must make liberal payments to the chief men of the horde, who, in extreme cases, however, are not satisfied until the offender has been seriously injured, or even killed.

561 Though at an early age youths are given some information
778 concerning their own "Muraian," no man undertakes the manufacture of these sacred objects before middle life, and then only
[587] under the direction of the old men. From time to time, as opportunity presents itself, a man is shown the "Muraian" of hordes other than his own. Such knowledge is in no way compulsory or essential to his taking his full place in the tribal life, but rather marks an additional stage in his education, and so increases his influence.

614 It is through these "Muraian" that the only cohesion between
616 the various scattered hordes is obtained. Hordes or clans of the
619 same moiety, though as widely separated as Elcho Island and
778 Blue Mud Bay, hold in reverence the same mythological ancestors, possess the same "Muraian," and so regard themselves as the same people.

000 It will be seen, from the above, how wide is the influence of these totemic beliefs, and how important a place they occupy in the life of the people. Further brief reference will be made to them under the heading of Death and Burial Beliefs and Customs.

^ [i.e. "NARA" CEREMONIES -- ANALYST]

Magic and Disease.

The exercise of magic is also believed to be the cause of 753
epidemic and other diseases. One man known to me is suffering 754
from leprosy in an advanced form, and the belief is that his condition is the result of magic directed in the following way:—The man who desired to injure him, because of a quarrel over an aboriginal woman, first of all built a rude bark hut. On the inside of the bark a grotesque figure was drawn, to which was given the name of the victim. The hut was then fired, and, as it burned, this man is said to have "sung" his victim, expressing the desire that as the fire destroyed the figure on the bark, so disease would destroy the other man.

When an epidemic of measles broke out at Goulburn Island, the cause was looked for locally, and one of the old men supplied the following explanation:—Some time previously a man had died of injuries received in a tribal quarrel. That death had never been avenged, so two of his tribal brothers made their way to a spot on the mainland which is associated with the activities of their tribal ancestors, and so is tabu. Taking some damp earth from this spot, these men lit a fire, in which stones were heated, the sacred earth being then placed on the heated stones, and the whole covered with paper-bark.

As the smoke and steam emerged, these men danced round the fire, and, addressing the smoke, requested it to go over to the island and smite the people there with sickness and death, as punishment for the killing of their brother. Proof that it did so is for these people found in the fact that disease came, and a number sickened and died.

The coming of whooping cough to our Milingimbi Station is explained in a similar way. Near to this station is another of [778]
these places sacred to two mythological female ancestors. Legend has it that at this spot these women were seized with a serious coughing complaint, and, ejecting the sputum, remarked, "We will leave this sickness here for future inhabitants of this place." A man, who is believed to have had a grudge against certain of our station people, is said to have first cut down a milk-wood tree at this sacred spot, and to have reduced it to small chips. He next stooped over these chips, coughing and spitting, until he fell exhausted. On recovering, he placed these prepared chips on a

753 fire, and, as the smoke ascended, he asked it to carry this coughing
754 sickness to these people.

754 756 In this aboriginal community are men known as Gulung, or "Marrngit," who exercise magic in a curative or preventive way. Their chief function is to discover and combat the sinister purposes of the Ragalk, or of evil spirits. Neither the Ragalk nor the Marrngit occupy a position apart from the ordinary life of the people, nor do they exercise any special functions in the ceremonial life of the tribe.

628 765 778 Magic is also believed to operate through an article known as "Maivabala." When a man dies or is killed, a scrap of one of his bones, or a piece of one of his weapons or utensils, is given by one of his near relatives to each of his friends. This article is known as a "Maiyabala," and carries with it this important significance. Every man accepting the "Maiyabala" places himself under the obligation of doing his best to avenge the death of the deceased. I have known men who have allowed themselves to be persuaded into accepting the "Maiyabala," to be later deeply troubled when they have considered the probable consequences of their action. There is no way of escaping the obligation, and these men have thus made themselves party to a serious quarrel which probably does not concern them.

[672] 765 778 When a man, in fulfilment of this obligation, kills another, he is usually relieved from personal responsibility in the matter, the magical property of the "Maiyabala," by directing the man's spear and giving strength to his throw, being regarded as the actual cause of the killing. The Maiyabala is also worn as a charm, and is believed to assist the wearer in fighting or in the pursuit of game, the idea being that the spirit of the dead man reinforces and assists that of the wearer of this relic.

775 Closely allied to the above are some of the beliefs concerning the "Mali," or lesser spirits, of men who have been killed. When a man has killed another it is believed that the "Mali" of the slain seeks to enter the person of the slayer, the idea here being that, by overcoming the man's body, the victor has also overcome his spirit, which now seeks to serve its new master. Numbers of men of my acquaintance claim to have passed through this experience.

Spiritual Entities and Creation

Mali and Birrimbirr

[774] Man is believed to possess two spiritual entities, the "Mali," 775 or lesser spirit, and the "Birrimbirr," or spirit proper. When a person dies, the Mali for a time inhabits the accustomed haunts of the deceased, and then returns to the spirit centre of the [778] particular horde. Every one of these spirit centres includes a pool or spring of water, generally with trees and shrubs surrounding it, and the Mali is believed to enter either into the water or into one of the trees growing beside it. If one of these trees should be destroyed, it is believed that disaster will follow, for the destruction of the tree is regarded as equivalent to the destruction of the one whose Mali resides within it.

775 These Mali, or spirits, are believed to be reborn in successive 787 generations of the people. The Mali comes to a man in a dream and says to him, "I want my mother." "Where shall I find my mother?" The man, still in the dream, replies, "Your mother is there." and directs it to his wife. The Mali enters the woman, and later on is reborn into the life of the tribe. Always, when a man so dreams, he passes through some peculiar experience, the significance of which is not realised until afterwards.

For example, a man known to me was one day looking for food along the beach when he saw a fish of a rare, deep-sea variety floating in a most unusual way. This fish he captured and took back to the camp, where he recounted to his companions the circumstances under which he had found it. Other men present refused to partake of it, professing that they were not hungry. This man himself did, and then lay down and slept. While he slept he dreamed that a child spirit came to him in the manner indicated, but he did not associate the two facts until later, when he realised that his wife was to give birth to a child. He was then told by the other men who had been present on the previous occasion that they had refused to eat the fish because they knew

114 that the several centuries of contact with Macassan and pre-Macas-
san traders, fishers and sojourners which marked the Arnhem Land
177 coasts from the Victoria River right round to Groote Eylandt, were
794 not experienced in the other two tropical regions. It is, therefore,
possible that pre-Islamic religious influence was exerted on the
796 Aborigines, perhaps through individuals who accompanied the
Macassans and others to the islands to the north, for in some of
these, the earlier Hindu cults were cherished in spite of the prosely-
tizing nature of Islam. Moreover, the Mother cult-heroine is said in
[773] myths to have come through the sea, whether she be Kunapipi of the
Victoria and the Roper, or the Mother of the Iwaidja and other
tribes of Western Arnhem Land.*

Mana and Other Problems

The above is the general principle and question raised by the
114 Kunapipi cult. Mr. Berndt's book, however, in giving a description
778 and analysis of this cult, raises many other important matters. For
example, there is the problem of power or "grace" in religion, indi-
cated in north-east Arnhem Land by the term *dal*. It is the anthropo-
logical problem of *mana* over again. It operates through the Mother
[776] or through Ancestral Beings who in their "spirit parts" are present
in the ritual. But does the ritual automatically release that power,
setting it in motion for the welfare of man and nature? Or is it
manifested through life and increase by the will of the Mother or
other Being in response to the ritual? Obviously, according to the
doctrine, it cannot operate apart from such Being or Beings. Indeed,
is it not that Being in activity or rather in relation to man and nature
—an activity and presence realized in ritual? Problems associated
with the Doctrine of the Trinity are not peculiar to Christianity.

114 Mr. Berndt agrees with Professor Warner that the Aborigines are
not ignorant of physiological paternity. The ritual supports this con-
842 tention. True, these natives hold also the doctrine of pre-existence,
796 of spirit-children who enter the mothers for incarnation. But, what
this entry does is to provide the "shade", the eternal spirit-part, and
so give life to that which is already in the womb, as the result of
sexual intercourse. Intercourse does not merely prepare the way for
the entry of the child-spirit and for its subsequent birth; this is the
usual view. In addition, it is followed by the formation of the foetus

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* The point of entry of the Fertility Mother cult of north-western Arnhem Land is definitely placed by the Aborigines and their song cycles in the Coburg Peninsula. The Kunapipi cult, however, seems to be distinct from this, and while I incline to find its point of distribution in the lower Victoria region, the final decision must wait for more research in the field and further analysis of the material already in hand. Mr. Berndt's maps in this volume refer only to the recent and present movement of Kunapipi songs, the movement west from the Roper being a return along a song route to a western point of distribution, and not necessarily diffusion from a point of entry at the mouth of the Roper.

121 Several aspects should perhaps be mentioned in this *Preface*, since they throw new light on the study of Aboriginal religion.

771 776 Throughout the greater part of the Northern Territory the concept of a Fertility Mother is found. She is the direct or indirect inspiration of all religious thought and activity. She is the central theme of the Kunapipi ceremonies. Indeed, Kunapipi is one of her sacred names. Her "eternal" presence throws new light on the philosophy of totemism in the region, for it was she, herself without a totem, who brought the totems into being. Animals, birds, reptiles, Spirits, inanimate objects, physiographic features, became totemic through her divine influence and association, or because they served some purpose in relation to her "eternal" rôle of creator, cause of birth and rebirth and seasonal fluctuations. In the Kunapipi then, the totem bears the sacred imprint of its religious or mythological connection with the Mother. In this region, therefore, the study of totemism is a means to an end: and that end, where we have any detailed knowledge, is the Mother herself, existing as a divine Being serving as an explanation of religious thought, belief and behaviour.

This leads to the realm of the sacred, but the problem of the demarcation between the sacred and the profane, and of the part played by women in sacred ritual, particularly in the Kunapipi itself, needs to be considered far more intensively than is possible here.

121 771 778 Religious thought and action permeate the whole of an indigenous society, and are not manifested only on the sacred ceremonial ground when groups meet for the performance of ritual. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to separate the sacred from the profane. A man or woman does not receive sacred power directly or indirectly from the Sacred Mother only on the ceremonial ground, through the performance of ritual. He, or she, possesses innately a sacred or divine essence, which exists apart from any external coercion: whatever his or her degree of participation in the sacred collective rites, this personal germ of sacredness remains intact, and cannot be destroyed even by death. It seems probable however that this individual germ, which may perhaps be described as a person's own sacred aura, may be intensified on the occasion of religious ceremonies. [774] The spirit of a man (or woman) is derived directly from the Sacred Mother; his bones themselves are possessed of a sacred quality, being likened to the *rangga* emblems associated with the great ancestral Beings: and he himself bears "inside" (sacred) and "outside" (secular) personal names, which are in many cases of sacred origin.

121 562 771 796 Women have a far greater part to play in sacred religious ceremonies than has hitherto been observed. This is particularly the case in north-eastern Arnhem Land; and in the performance of the Kunapipi they are directly responsible for the efficacy of a whole series of ceremonies. Because they do not take part in all the rituals of a particular cult, this does not mean that they are excluded or are

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
OI17 Murngin OI17

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[for captions, see category 116, p. x]

PLATE II

[facing p. xxxii]

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951

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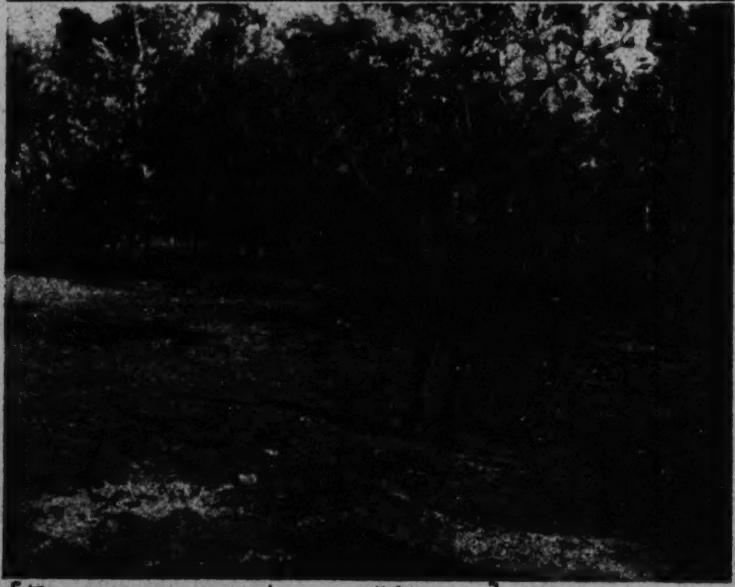
[291]



[For caption see category 116, p. x]

PLATE III

[facing p. 1]

"a mangrove barramundi"), whose home is around Blue Mud Bay. 614 Ngelkala is a "new" name, while the old term is Numburula, meaning 616 "a barramundi springing up after small fish". Still another Dalwongu ("light" language) belongs to the Manaitja ("the wild 192 honey bee"); another belongs to the Biringal *mala* (that is, "grass shooting out from a pool of water"), but is now allied to the Ri:tarngu (meaning the same as Biringal) *mata*; and another to the Mandji:kai ("sandfly") *mala*, being thus allied to a number of other *mata*.

Ri:radjingu is a *dua mata* (meaning "a long horizontal white cloud"), whose *mala* is Wururul ("from the blowfly"): it is allied to the Ba'rangu ("a white cloud") whose *mala* is Miliwuru (also a "white cloud"). The Ri:radjingu join, but are not directly associated with, the Kalpu *mata* ("the small *miliga* moon-fish") and Marakulu *mata* ("the *dandei* bark from the *durilji* gum tree"). The Kalpu are really Kaulwu:rl *mala* ("a bushy-topped spear-wood tree"), allied to the Djarlwak *mata* (associated with the spear-wood tree): alternate names for this *mala* are Mamari:n ("the spear-wood tree") and Djamunda ("little moon fish about the reef"). Marakulu *mata* is usually allied to Wurungguku ("the cry of the *wirici* pigeon"), Marangu ("*durilji* gum bark"), Kopateiindamiri ("spear stick from the *durilji* tree") and Lultma'rangu *mata* (that is, "look down to the Marangu"), who belong to the Durilji *mala* ("sapling of a gum-tree"). Another Durilji group has the Dapingu *mata* ("pigeon"). Moreover, Marakulu, Marangu, Lultma'rangu and Kopateiindamiri *mata* can be Da:poingu (not Dapingu) *mala*, and Ri:radjingu, Kalpu, Ngeimil ("lily root") and Gwo:la mala ("salt-water catfish") *mata* can also join in.

This gives some idea of a few of the *jiritja* and *dua mala* and *mata*, 614 together with the meanings of the terms which are directly and 616 indirectly associated with the clan mythology, totemism and ritual life. "Inside" or sacred names are used also to refer to the clans; [778] these, too, are associated with the ritual life, and are used only on the ceremonial ground in a special form of what are known as *bukalilji* (*jiritja*) or *bukali* (*dua*)—sacred invocations to the main Spirit Beings.

Each clan (or each linguistic group), or series of clans (or of *mata*), shares in a common mythology, and undertakes particular ceremonies associated with this. Each clan, too, has access to a number of waterholes, some of which are sacred; and each is guardian of sacred *mareiin* (an "outside" or camp term) or *rangga* ("inside" or sacred term) ceremonial objects, and of *nara* ceremonies. Frequently the members of both moieties unite to perform the *nara* of one clan (or *mata*), but the real ownership is rarely disputed.

Certain *mata* are more closely allied by ties of marriage than are others, and each *mata* has definite *mata* of the opposite moiety with which it prefers to arrange marriages.

This is the fundamental basis of Yirrkalla, and north-eastern

tion of other natural species—all phenomena which are necessary for 771
the continuance and well-being of the people themselves. In keeping 789
with this doctrine, a natural development has been the stress on pro-
creation—the importance of pregnancy and child-birth, and the 794
essential sequence of sexual intercourse and conception, expressed [842]
particularly in ritual and long song cycles.

In order to understand Kunapipi cult life and belief, it is necessary to summarize very briefly some of the other cults which flourish beside it in this area.

The Djanggawul myth, consisting of several hundreds of lengthy 773
songs, relates the adventures of two men and two women, who in [533]
the Dreaming Period landed at Port Bradshaw, on the north-east
Arnhem Land coast. They had journeyed across the sea from an
island called Bralku, now known as the *dua* home of the dead, some-
where beyond Groote Eylandt. These Ancestral Beings are known
generally as the Djanggawul, but had their own personal names.
The leader was Djanggawul himself; the two women were his
sisters, the younger Maralaitj, and the older Pildjiwuraroiju; and
their companion was Bralbral, who plays only a minor part in this
great cycle. In their canoe they brought a large conical *ngainmara* [778]
mat, which is now used particularly by the women, and also certain
sacred *rangga* sticks possessing life-giving qualities. The mat sym- [831]
bolized the uterus; the *rangga* sticks were penes, and when not being
used ritually, were kept hidden in the *ngainmara*.

As the Djanggawul journeyed along the coast, they met other
Ancestral Beings like Laintjung and the Baijini, and Spirits such as [776]
Pomapoma, Kultana, Woijal, Burulu-burulu and others; but none
of these had the procreating powers of the great Djanggawul.
Djanggawul had an elongated penis; and his two sisters had long [831]
clitori which dragged on the ground as they walked. Djanggawul had
sexual relations with his sisters, so that they were continually preg-
nant. From time to time, at the camps where they stayed, he would
lift their clitori to one side, and put his hand up into the uteri to
remove many children of both sexes: these were the ancestors of the
present aborigines. The song cycle features the perpetual pregnancy 773
of the two sisters, their uteri being likened to the *ngainmara* mats
which they brought with them, while the people who are removed 533
from them in childbirth are the *rangga*. It is said that a person's
bones are like *rangga*, inherited from both the father and mother, [827]
who in turn inherited theirs through the generations of ancestors,
right back to the Eternal Times of Djanggawul and the creative
heroes. Therefore, at death, a person's material remains, as well as [764]
his spiritual substance, must be treated with respect, and surrounded
by ritual.

An important aspect of this myth, second only to the theme of 773
fertility, concerns the institution of sacred ritual. In the beginning, 796

Before turning to our main study, we may mention briefly the
778 presence of material emblems and symbols in religious life. This
532 north-eastern culture, far more than those to the south and south-west, pays great attention to the outward expression of religious and esoteric ideology, both as a guide to ritual behaviour, and as a means of impressing certain concepts on the minds of neophytes. In addition to copies of the *rangga* introduced by Djanggawul, Laintjung and others, there are many beautifully made *rangga*[4] relating to various totemic objects and natural species, as well as to human organs and ancestral people, used constantly as "high" *rangga* in the *nara* rituals. They are often stylized, made from various hard woods, cane or paperbark, bound with jungle-fibre twine, painted with clan totemic designs, and ornamented with colourful feathered strings. There are also human figures, carved from blocks of wood, and decorated in the same way. In the Wauwalak ceremonies many other sacred, *mareiin*, objects are used: the *uwar* drum of the *ngu:rlmak*, the *jelmalandji* "posts" and forked stick *djepalmandji* of the *kunapipi*, the *julunggul* trumpets and dancing posts of the *djunggawon*. There are also bark paintings, with sacred totemic clan designs, used on the ceremonial ground, or with copies of chest drawings.

All these, for the aborigine, are concrete expressions of his
771 religious concepts: they prepare his mind to accept the essence of
778 sacred dogma, and to grasp its significance. As symbols, they keep alive for him the reality of traditional belief. Faith is essential for
182 social cohesion, giving meaning and sanction to behaviour patterns
177 and institutions; its presence has been far more apparent in Aboriginal societies throughout Australia than in contemporary European groups. The majority of these aborigines, before contact, believed implicitly in the essential goodness of their own way of life; all was explained, each member of the community had a definite place in the scheme of things, and the future was well determined. To-day, how-
177 ever, the native on the fringe of European culture finds that social
182 conditions are changing, his accepted beliefs have been sharply questioned, and an alien ideology is being more intensively enforced.
771 His ceremonies are performed less frequently, his great song cycles sung less fervently, and his sacred objects and paraphernalia are gradually losing their meaning and function. The cohesive and integrating qualities of his religion and mythology are weakened, and finally destroyed. The balance of his own cultural structure, with all its apparent weaknesses and inconsistencies, is upset by intensive external pressure and "civilizing" influences. No longer is the pattern of his life determined by a traditional code. Instead, he discovers himself to be relying more and more constantly on alien beliefs and ideas; but owing to the suddenness of the change, and his inability

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[4] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, F. W. Cheshire, Melbourne, 1950, illustrated.

171 Territory,[4] artists depict human beings, as totemites, flowing from
the uterus of the Mother into the round "ring place" (or ceremonial
794 ground) for the performance of sacred rites. The "ring place" is
773 itself the uterus of the Mother. To-day, in the really important sacred
776 ceremonies, a special ring place is used for the performance of these
rituals. As the neophytes leave the camp for the sacred ground, they
[778] themselves are said to become increasingly sacred, and to enter the
Mother; they go into her uterus, the ring place, as happened in the
beginning. When the ritual is completed the Mother "lets them out";
they emerge from the ring place, and pass once more into ordinary
life. These ring places vary in shape from place to place, but all
symbolize the Mother's uterus. The sacred ceremonies associated with
[778] this Fertility Woman are called in pidgin English "Big Sunday",
inferring a sacred atmosphere from the European connotation of the
word Sunday, while the term refers also to "sandy place", the soft
ground upon which the sacred dancing is performed. The appellation
"Big Sunday", in some regions, may also be derived from the term
"Centre" place, which refers to the sacred ceremonial ground.

All Kunapipi ritual, irrespective of region, has thus a common
796 theme. We find in it the return to the Mother's uterus, and the
794 eventual emergence, when the postulants come out from their sacred
ritual refreshed, and as "new" men (that is, it is like a "rebirth"):
771 this symbolic enactment of birth brings with it a renewal of ideals,
energy and faith. Fertility and the supplying of food, sexual pleasure
831 and satisfaction, solidarity within the group, and an undividing
faith in the divine truth of the cult—all these elements are present.
Food and sex, fundamental in human life, and consequently in
religion, owe their continuance, it is said, to the Eternal Mother.
It is not surprising that people living in such close proximity to
nature, with few artificial distractions, should recognise the
fundamental importance of female fertility, and see in it a central theme of
religion.

* * * *

171 In north-eastern Arnhem Land, the Kunapipi cult is not yet
deeply entrenched, since it has been introduced within comparatively
794 recent times. Its earliest infiltration took place through the
Reinbaranga (sometimes termed Rembranga, and localized in
177 south-western Arnhem Land) and Burera tribes and so into Milingimbi,
where Professor L. Warner witnessed some of its rituals twenty years
ago. From this centre it spread westwards towards Goulburn
Islands and Oenpelli,[5] and eastwards to Elcho Island and Arnhem
Bay. But it does not seem to have gripped, at that time, the imagina-

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[4] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *op. cit. Oceania*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, Plates I to III; and R. and C. Berndt, Aboriginal Art in Central-Western Northern Territory, *Meanjin*, Spring, 1950, pp. 183–188, ten plates.

[5] R. and C. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, Chapter IV, Section IX.

773 she sprayed water outwards and upwards to form many rain clouds.

The two sisters, who were sitting down, saw these clouds forming into one, threatening rain. But they did not suspect that Julunggul had sent them.

"You had better get some stringy-bark, so that we can make a hut", said the *gungman* to her sister. "It's going to rain."

"All right, sister"; and the younger went out to cut sheets of bark. The older sister was still not strong enough to do any heavy work.

After the *wirlkul* had made several journeys, bringing back sheets of bark, the two constructed a simple hut; they lit a fire in the doorway, and went inside to rest. By this time it was sunset, and the rain began to fall, washing the coagulated blood from the ground into the sacred well. The Julunggul stirred in discomfort, seeing the streaks of blood on the surface of the water.

When it was dark, Julunggul emerged again from her well; holding high her head she spat out lightning, one vivid flash after another, until the Wauwalak crouched together in fear, calling out at each flash. (This lightning is said to have been different to that normally seen; but the women didn't know it was caused by the Snake. "They thought it was from cloud.")

After the lightning, the Julunggul slowly and deliberately came out of the well, dragging her sinuous body. But at first, pleased that the lightning had finished, the Wauwalak did not see her.

Gradually the Snake drew nearer to the cleared place around the bark hut, her eyes protruding like great lights searching out the women. Then suddenly the Wauwalak saw the Julunggul, and began to cry out.

"What are we going to do?"

"We'd better dance to keep her away."

So the *wirlkul* began to dance, to hinder the Snake's progress. She moved gracefully, shuffling her feet, swaying her body from side to side, and holding in her hands feathered string from which she made cats-cradles as she danced. This particular dancing is called *keiweijun*, for as the girl danced she called out *kei'wa! kei'wa!* (Go away! Go away!)[4] The Julunggul stopped in her course, and watched the dancing. But the girl grew tired, and called out: "Come on, sister, your turn now: I want to rest".

The older sister came from the hut, leaving her child in its cradle of soft paperbark, and began to dance. But her blood, still intermittently flowing, attracted the Snake further; and she moved towards them.

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[841]
[778]

[3] In contradiction to this, menstruation and afterbirth blood is usually described as *maraiin*, or sacred, and so could not "pollute" the well. There is the suggestion that the snake found the blood attractive. This concept will be discussed later in a detailed study of the Wauwalak.

[4] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land*, Chapter IV, Sections IV, V and VIII.

173 Some confusion exists as to how the afterbirth blood fell into the sacred well of Muruwul. It is said by some that the older Sister went
114 down to the well to obtain water for drinking, and the blood dropped in while she was bending over. Others declare that the rain washed the blood into the well. The Julunggul, however, first smelt the proximity of the Two Sisters, and then the blood of the older. They had, according to the most reliable version, been camped at a swamp surrounded with "cabbage" or "wild coconut" palms, not far from Muruwul. It was here that much blood fell; when the rain began, the blood was carried down to the sacred well. A number of songs deal with this aspect.

Julunggul, so aborigines say, resembles an immense coloured caterpillar, *dapal*, with similar features and body, but without its numerous
[534] legs; the bullroarer is like this, particularly when it has been decorated with feather down fastened on with blood, and attached to a long cord of human hair twine.

* * * *

Since there are deviations in other Wauwalak versions, it is advisable to append the following two stories on the same subject; but the main theme is the same, and only the differences will be described in detail.

173 The two Wauwalak painted each other with boomerang designs[6] before the birth of the elder sister's child.[7] When it was born, with the help of other unnamed women, the two started off for Muruwul. On arrival there the older sister partially built a bark hut called *murlk* (a sacred name, for this is the term for the hut placed on the ceremonial ground in the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngu:rlmak* rituals). Her afterbirth blood was still intermittently flowing. The younger sister had, in the meantime, hidden herself in the surrounding grass. When the *murlk* was finished she came out, and began to dance along the track leading to the hut and to the well: she skipped along, shaking branches as she danced, just as the women dance to-day in the secular *djunggawon* and *kunapipi*. Coming near the mouth of the hut, she shook the branches, threw them aside, and entered; she sat down in there with her sister, and her sister's daughter. At the same time, she felt her menstruation blood running inside her from her breasts to her navel, down into the uterus, and flowing out. This had been caused by her energetic dancing, the movement of her hips, buttocks and legs. She had danced, too, the dance of the "spring water", the running streams of rain-water during the wet season,

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[778]
[839]

[6] This design refers to the special boomerang used for ritual defloration (sometimes associated with ceremonial intercourse) on the Kunapipi ground; the Rose River Love Song Cycle treats this subject. *Vide*, also, Chapters IV and V.

[7] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, Sacred Figures of Ancestral Beings of Arnhem Land. *Oceania*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, pp. 314-317.

The Kunapipi should be primarily *dua*, but a split of some kind 796
seems to have taken place, so that now the *jiritja* moiety groups have
a separate song cycle; this may perhaps be explained by the fact that, 616
in the eyes of the north-east Arnhem Landers, the Kunapipi is of alien
origin. The division of ritual activities between both *dua* and *jiritja*
people is of importance in ascertaining the relationship of individual
aborigines to the Wauwalak ceremonies. This aspect is most
apparent in the manufacture of the *jelmalandji* "posts"; but we can
touch upon it only briefly here. We are concerned not so much with
the individual's attitude towards his ritual and mythology, or with
the relationship of the various neophytes to one another on the
sacred ground, as with the fundamental doctrine of this particular [771]
Aboriginal religion and its expression in ritual. Therefore the individual
must play only a subsidiary part in this specific study.

After the swallowing of the Wauwalak, the Two Sisters "changed" 773
their names to Ka'lerika'lering (or Girilinggiriling, that is, "having
been swallowed") so that they "could belong to the Kunapipi side". 796
That is, in theory, during the performance of the Kunapipi, the Sisters
are no longer called by the term Wauwalak, although this is still
employed in the *ngu:rlmak* and *djunggawon*. We shall, however, when
referring to the Kunapipi, continue to call them Wauwalak.

Shortly before this, an unmarried male python, called *Lu'ningu* (that is, from *lu'ni*, a young unmarried man; *lu'ningu*, "place of young unmarried men"), had come out of the sacred Muruwul well, and watched the Julunggul swallowing the Wauwalak. When they were vomited out, Lu'ningu went all round the Muruwul country, swallowing all the young unmarried boys (termed *lu'nilu'ni*). But whereas the Wauwalak were vomited and became alive, the young boys were vomited dead, and did not revive. They had died while inside the Snake, and when they were vomited there was no flesh on their bodies; only bones emerged.

As a protest against this outrage by Lu'ningu, the remaining men held a large meeting and decided to kill the Snake," for he was no good, this Lu'ningu; he had swallowed all the young men and they had died". They compared the Lu'ningu with the Julunggul, saying: "Lu'ningu is no good, he vomits up his people dead. But Julunggul is all right; he vomited up the Wauwalak so that they were alive". So they hunted out Lu'ningu, spearing him until he died.

"What are we going to do?" they asked one another then. So they 773
made a large *jelmalandji* which stood upright in the ground, in
memory of this Snake. That is, "they took a picture of Lu'ningu" 778
saying, "we have to make this Snake, because we killed him". Some 796
confusion exists here, in identifying the *jelmalandji* with the Lu'ningu;
in the big Kunapipi rituals this object is said to represent the
Julunggul who swallowed the Wauwalak.

773 When these people had completed the *jelmalandji* emblem, they
held another meeting "to think about the Wauwalak". "What are
796 we going to do about the blood of those two women?" they asked
● [778] one another.

The most important ceremonial headman, named Nga:ti (that is, termite, sometimes called "meat" ant, who was responsible for revivifying the Wauwalak), stood up; grasping the blade of his stone-spear, he cut his arm and let the blood flow out. "We make ourselves like those two women", he said.

Then other men got up; while some cut a vein inside the elbow,
[785] others cut the inner part of their forearm above the wrist, and all tied
ligatures about their upper arms. This is a substitute for re-opening
the penis incisure to obtain a flow of blood similar to that of the
Mother Kunapipi: it should be remembered that a great deal of the
original Kunapipi ritual concerns subincising groups.

As they let the blood flow they said, "Ah, very good: that is the blood of the 'Spring' Women (that is, afterbirth blood and the menstruation)".

"And what shall we do for the Snake's 'shout' (that is, the sound
773 made by the Julunggul)?" they asked.

778 They built another *jelmalandji*, larger than the first, to represent
the Julunggul who swallowed the Wauwalak. They smeared arm
796 blood all over its surface, and on to it fastened wild cotton (or white
feather down) to form a pattern symbolizing the Snake. "But it
makes no sound", they said. "It is not like the Julunggul of the
djunggawon, that when blown makes the sound of the Snake; nor is
it like the great *uwar* which 'cries out' when beaten. What shall we
do?"

So they took a clean piece of wood, from the tree which the
[534] Julunggul had split by lightning (see previous chapter), and marked
it with the Snake design. They obtained human hair cord, and
threaded it through the hole they had bored at one end of the wooden
slab. When they swung this object (the bullroarer), they could hear
the sound of the Julunggul: "this is the different shout, for the
Kunapipi side".

In this case, too, contrary information exists: and this bullroarer
773 for use in the Kunapipi is sometimes said to be the voice of Lu'ningu.
778 Its sound then is a "little bit low", spasmodic and quick, for this
Snake was full from having eaten so many young men, and he was
796 tired. In the *ngu:rlmuk* side, the sound of the bullroarer is longer and
184 heavier, for the Julunggul had eaten only the Wauwalak and the
child. In the eastern *ngu:rlmuk* rituals, however, the bullroarer is not
used, being reserved solely for the Kunapipi. Such confusion in the
identification of fundamental ritual objects is not unusual in Aboriginal religion; and for our purpose here it is preferable perhaps to
conform to the original version, in which the bullroarer is said to be

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the voice of Julunggul.[2] At the same time, however, the Lu'ningu 84
Snake plays an important part in purely male sacred life.

The whole problem of interpretation depends on the distribution 773
of the Wauwalak ritual among the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and [778]
ngu:rlmak. For example, the first is a re-enactment of the swallowing of the Two Sisters by Julunggul, and the performance of totemic ceremonies relevant to the animals caught by the women for food. The second concerns the swallowing of the young men, the presence of Julunggul after the swallowing of the Wauwalak, and a number of dances relating to copulation and procreation, stressing the theme of fertility. The third and final ceremonial sequence deals principally with the *murlk* shade, and with other Snakes including the Julunggul. All these rituals to some extent overlap, and the whole myth may be enacted to create a framework for specific aspects.

In the *djunggawon* the Python is called Julunggul and swallows the Wauwalak. In the Kunapipi it is usually known as Moiit, and in addition to swallowing the young men, and disgorging and re-swallowing the Wauwalak, is said to have swallowed the Nga:ti; but this is not substantiated by relevant mythology, and appears to be a Rose River addition. In the *ngu:rlmak*, the same Snake is known as *uwar*. As Julunggul is the commonest sacred term for the Python, it has been retained throughout this work, although some alternatives have been used.

In the Kunapipi, male neophytes leaving the main camp for the sacred ground are said to be swallowed by Lu'ningu, just as he swallowed the young men in the Dreaming Era; and in the old days they had to stop away from womenfolk from a period of two weeks to two months, symbolizing their stay inside the belly of the Snake. When the period of ceremonies is finished they return as new men (for Lu'ningu vomited up the young men dead). In the *djunggawon* the sacred ritual is associated more with women, because of the Wauwalak, and the novices may be seen constantly: "for those Wauwalak were vomited quickly, and were soon alive".

It is the practice, in the Kunapipi, to send messengers in all direc- 773
tions, notifying various groups that a ceremony is to take place.
Young male postulants are also sent with their guardians, and their 796
going symbolizes "vomiting". That is, in leaving their home camp and 203
going to another some distance away, they are being vomited through the air to the strange place by Lu'ningu (in other versions, by Julunggul). And when they eventually return, together with alien groups who are to attend the Kunapipi ceremony, they are swallowed again "just as the Wauwalak were", or like the young men in the

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[2] In regions where the Kunapipi is more or less indigenous, the sound of the [534]
bullroarer is the Fertility Mother's voice, and the object itself symbolizes her uterus. *Vide* Chapters IX–XI. In other areas, the bullroarer represents the penis, and its symbolism depends sometimes on its shape and sound.

773 Dreaming Period. When they first leave their home camp they are painted with red-ochre and arm-blood, which represent the blood 796 of the Wauwalak. That is, for the purpose of the ritual they become 203 the Two Sisters, and are swallowed by Julunggul; and on their emergence from the ritual, they are revivified just as were the women. On their returning home, they are again smeared with red-ochre and arm blood before entering the sacred Kunapipi ground.

In all the rituals we find the main theme of the Wauwalak's adven- 773 ture with Julunggul; but subsidiary Pythons are present, and tend to confuse this aspect of the doctrine. There are Lu'ningu, the Julunggul 796 herself (either alone, or with her husband playing an active or inactive 776 part), and the group of young snakes who watched the actual swallowing of the Wauwalak. Another python, an unmarried male, is associated with Gru:awona, where he still lives in his spirit form. He threw up a great amount of earth and formed a hill; then he dug up more earth, and formed another hill with a high bank at one side. Under this bank he lives, beside the deep pool; here the water is continually swirling, and its surface is the colour of the rainbow. Close by, at Muruwul, it is said, is a rainbow reaching up into the sky: that is Julunggul "twisting up" to catch the Wauwalak. It was here, at Muruwul, that man first "took part for that Snake" (see myth above); "for that Snake got to be Dreaming *mareiin* for us, because he swallowed the Wauwalak. Now we make that Wauwalak • [778] *murlk* on our sacred ground, in just the same way as it was first made at Muruwul. In it we place the long wooden *julunggul* 'trumpet', all painted and decorated in totemic designs, for the *djunggawon*, or the *uwar* log 'drum' for the *ngu:rlmak*. And instead of Julunggul swallowing the Wauwalak, it swallows the young boys we send out to the rituals".

In the Kunapipi the two long *jelmalandji* emblems are erected, but they cannot "talk"; "we have to make sound for them, so we twirl a bullroarer". This is called, in translation, the "shout side", because, informants explain, "those two *jelmalandji* couldn't speak, and we have to make own language for them". Orthodox versions stress that the *jelmalandji* are the two Snakes, the male and female Julunggul,[3] standing up looking about after having swallowed the Wauwalak and the child, and talking to other Pythons on the Wessels and elsewhere.

773 The *murlk* or hut, also called *bambu:la* (a very sacred term), is not 778 used to any extent in the Kunapipi, but it is present in both the 796 *djunggawon* and the *ngu:rlmak*. As well as being the hut in which the

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346 [3] In central-western Northern Territory these *jelmalandji* are said to represent both the Fertility Mother and the Rainbow Snake (a superimposition of the snake on the Mother); at Birrundudu, the *jelmalandji* had pearl-shell eyes, and other decorations. And in some versions (see later) one *jelmalandji* is the Snake, and the other the "cabbage" palm growing at Muruwul (the latter serves to symbolize the Julunggul).

Wauwalak sheltered, and into which the Julunggul came, the *murlk* 773
symbolizes the uterus of the Mother (the Wauwalak or Djanggawul). 778
Old aborigines say: "You know, when the Julunggul went into the
hut, we mean that a penis is entering a woman's vagina, and this hut 796
is a uterus too: that is why we have it on the sacred ground, for it 346
reminds us that everything must come from the Mother's uterus.
That is how we came in the Dreaming; and people still continue to
come in that way, don't they? And why do we have that Julunggul?
Well, don't we have to have a penis to open up and inseminate the
woman, so that she can give birth to children? And when the
Julunggul swallows the Wauwalak, that is like a penis being swallowed by a vagina, only we put it the other way around. Now, when [789]
we hold our big rituals, we do the very same things, because we want
the seasons to come, and things to grow, and people to be born:
that is the real meaning of what we do".

The Kunapipi rituals have been described in some detail by Dr. 114
Warner (*op. cit.* pp. 290–311), and the reader is referred to this for
comparisons. We will mention only various features found in the 796
Yirrkalla region, indicating their relation to the Wauwalak mythology, and interpreting (from native explanations) the actions of the neophytes. It is beyond the scope of this work to record minute details of each stage of the ceremony, for this would entail description of dancing and many irrelevant actions, individual interpretations, and the whole interaction of men and women in and away from the sacred ground. Some of the Kunapipi songs, used both on the sacred ground and in the main camp, are given in Chapters VII and VIII, and these reveal certain details not treated here.

* * * *

The Kunapipi is held usually in the dry season, when food is 796
plentiful; for during this ceremony people are reaping the benefits of
performances held in the previous year, and at the same time are
preparing for the coming wet season and the subsequent growth of
food. Ceremonies may extend over a period of two weeks to two
months, and in unusual cases as long as two years. But now, when [797]
the Mission frowns on the Kunapipi and its attendant rituals, it may
be brought to a close after a few days with the result that much of the [177]
intricate symbolism is omitted. The principal Kunapipi leader is
usually a man of the Li:alauwermiri or an affiliated linguistic group, [614]
or one whose totemic *rangga*, *mareiin* objects, or song cycle are
associated with Muruwul sacred well and the Wauwalak. In the [616]
Yirrkalla region the Kunapipi leaders may have come from Rose
River, being members of groups which are in other respects culturally
alien, or from *dua* clans near Rose River who have obtained the
Kunapipi from further south.

796 [203] [561] The ceremony begins when messengers are first sent out to the various camps to notify other groups, and when the chosen initiates (young boys who have gone through the *djunggawon* age-grading ceremony) are taken away from their home camp. But it may be some time before the more serious parts of the rituals can commence.

796 778 In the meantime, while awaiting the visitors, the *dua* headmen and the Kunapipi leader go out from the main camp and make a ceremonial ground or "centre" (that is "Sandy" or "Sunday") place; this entails the clearing of a ground which the men are in the habit of using for such a purpose. [534] The Kunapipi leader makes a bullroarer, its cord attached to a stick by which it will be swung; [533] its painting and anointing with blood (as described above) are accompanied by singing.

796 533 535 Some time afterwards, the first Kunapipi ceremony takes place in the main camp, "to let the women know that it is beginning". Men sing "outside" Wauwalak and "outside" Kunapipi songs which summarize preceding events, while the women dance. These are called *gudambiri*, or ordinary secular dances; although they do not pretend to be really sacred, they are nevertheless most important, for they put everyone into the mood for the coming rituals. Non-sacred *garma* (or clan songs) are also sung and danced. These may continue for weeks before the main rituals commence: but towards the end, the men, women, and children sing the "outside" Kunapipi songs with their rapid rhythm.

796 [534] Out in the bush on the sacred ground[4] a man swings the bullroarer. There is a hush; the deep-throated sound of Julunggul is heard by all in the camp. In answer, the Kunapipi leader calls, followed by the cries of all the women: "they cry out just like those two Wauwalak, for Julunggul is sneaking towards the camp, as he did towards the *murlk*". *Jiritja* men answer, too, symbolizing *jiritja* snakes.

796 881 Almost immediately after this, the *jiritja* men take out the young boys to meet the Julunggul (that is, if they have not been sent away to other camps; if they have gone, this part of the ceremony takes place when they return, with the visitors who are to participate). [302] The boys have been smeared with red-ochre and arm blood and,

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[778] [4] The sacred ground is in the shape of a triangle. This is similar to the *djunggawon* dancing ground, and is said to resemble Julunggul's body. One side of the elongated triangle is classified as [illegible], and the opposite side as *jiritja*: but this is only for ritual purposes. At the apex of the triangle a hole is dug, symbolizing Muruwul: this is the *nunggaru*. The "inside" meaning of this triangular dancing place is said to be the Mother's uterus: men go into the uterus for rituals. This conforms to the meaning of the ground in other regions, for example, in western-central Northern Territory. The Kunapipi ground is arranged differently from that of the *djunggawon*, but retains its fundamental shape.

of invocation.] Most of the actors are smeared thickly with wallaby 796
or kangaroo grease, and then with red-ochre. When they become hot 536
from dancing the grease runs and drips off them, symbolizing the [302]
sweat of a pair of totemic animals (or human beings) after coitus.
The shining grease is termed *laklak*, which is an alternate name for
the younger Wauwalak sister.

When the second new moon appears from the beginning of the 796
Kunapipi, depending, of course, on the proposed length of the ceremony, the men again go out to the sacred ground. Warner (*op. cit.* 778
p. 301) mentions that the Muruwul well (or *nanggaru*) is abandoned [805]
at this stage; but in the eastern counterparts witnessed and discussed, it is retained. This appears to depend mainly on the inclination of the Kunapipi leaders, who at Yirrkalla usually take their pattern from Rose River. A large crescent-shaped trench is dug, the *ba'uma* (also called *kanala*, or *kanalara*, the central-western Northern Territory term). This is an extremely important symbol in the Kunapipi. It is usually about ten to twelve feet long, four to five feet deep, and about four feet wide, with earth piled along its concave sides. And it may signify any of the following: the track mark of the female Julunggul; the mark left by her fall, after swallowing the Wauwalak; the crescent-shaped position in which the Wauwalak rested in their *murlk*, before the Snake swallowed them; the clitoris of the Wauwalak; and, its real "inside" meaning, the uterus of the Wauwalak (as a substitute for the Djanggawul Fertility Mothers). Another smaller hole is also dug during some ceremonies; this is called the "younger hole", the uterus of the younger sister, whereas the larger *ba'uma*, also called *da:p* (or *dapi*, foreskin, symbolizing a dilly-bag or uterus), is the uterus of the elder sister. But the principal hole is the *ba'uma*, and is always present in the Kunapipi.

When the *ba'uma* is completed, snake totem actors dance or writhe 796
in the hole. Then two actors, one representing a man and another a
woman, dance the "mating dance". The man has an erect bark penis 831
and moves in pursuit of the "woman", who is desirous of coitus: 535
they move towards the trench and dance around it, and at its entrance
they simulate sexual intercourse. The Mother is said to be present [776]
in the *ba'uma*, and her life-giving powers are made operative by the sexual actions of the two dancers. ("The acting of coitus by the totemites is like the uterus being fertilized": the Mother is having sexual intercourse, so that she may produce.)

Various other dances are held in the *ba'uma*, at which the young initiates are present; the majority are related to coitus. There is, for example, the *dari:t* dance. Two men, representing male and female wagtails, sit opposite each other in the trench with legs folded beneath them; their knees touch, and in the dancing they simulate coitus. There is also the *molit'manina* (*molit* being an alternate name for Julunggul) dance, of the male and female Julunggul Rock

796 Pythons. One sits on the thighs of the other in the trench, and they
535 have "coitus". These ceremonies are spread over a number of days,
831 often with a certain amount of repetition.

In the meantime, the *jiritja* men have been making the *jelmalandji*
796 emblems. It is said that "the *jiritja* have got a *dua* job", and they hunt
●778 all the *dua* away from the special place near the sacred ground where
the manufacture is in progress. This "giving the job" to the *jiritja* is
[616] termed *lr'wondji* or *marahwa*. They must be paid with food, clothing, tobacco and indigenous objects, not on the sacred ground but in the main camp. The *jelmalandji* are twelve to twenty feet in length, and about two and a half feet wide at the centre. They are formed with a solid pole, around which pads of grass and paperbark (and in these days blankets and bagging) are tied with native fibres. The outer covering of bark is then smeared with arm blood and red-ochre, on to which is fastened birds' down or wild cotton so that a meandering pattern is formed, symbolizing Julunggul. At the apex of the "post"
[301] is a bunch of cockatoo feathers "like a man wears in his hair". Both *jelmalandji*, one larger than the other, have similar designs. But although one represents Julunggul, the other is said to be the "cabbage" or "wild coconut" (*gulwiri*) palm, which was standing near the Wauwalak's hut, or at the palm-tree swamp from which the blood was washed down to the sacred well (or billabong). Aborigines
[773] explain, "they made the Snake out of that tree", meaning either that the first *jelmalandji* was constructed from the palm tree, or that the Snake itself was derived from it. The latter is probably correct, for this "wild coconut" palm is said to be the spirit of Julunggul: "their spirits were standing in the shape of palm trees near Muruwul, when the Julunggul emerged from the well to swallow the Wauwalak".

While the *jiritja* are making the *jelmalandji*, the *dua* prepare the
796 feather down for body decoration: this has come from the *jiritja*,
237 who are paid for it. It is the *dua* who play the most important part in
301 the ceremonial dancing; and while the final touches are being put to
616 the *jelmalandji*, the *dua* actors decorate themselves, sticking on the feathers with arm blood. When everything is ready, the two moiety
[783] groups meet each other, and rub sweat over one anothers' eyes;[6] after this, each group may see what the other has done. The *jiritja* examine the body designs of the *dua*, and the latter may observe the *jelmalandji*.

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[6] That is, the *jiritja* rub sweat from their armpits over the eyes of the *dua*, and *vice versa*. This process is carried out when new *rangga* objects or *marelin* ceremonies are seen for the first time, or when novices or visitors are observing sacred dancing or ceremonial emblems (objects, body or bark paintings, and so on). It means that their eyes may now be opened, they can now see "with sacredness". "The old people have to do this to us before we can see"; for, as one informant explained, "It is like moving over some of the old Law to the youngest (younger generation), and we get trouble if we look straight away". It is called [illegible].

796 begins with surreptitious meetings at night in the nearby bush. There may be more men than women attending the ceremony, and
835 it may so happen that one woman will have a number of Kunapipi partners to whom she will go. Her husband realizes that this period is charged with social effervescence, so that her indulgence is viewed as a conventional expression, and as an important element in the atmosphere of general goodwill. Some women, however, prefer to wait until the last night, being emotionally excited, then, to an abnormal degree. Prior to this final stage, there is general exchange
[832] of obscenities and erotic allusions between men and women, and between the proposed Kunapipi partners.

Two or three nights before the finale the men return to the sacred
796 ground, and sitting around the fires begin to sing parts of the Kuna-
535 pipi cycle relating to ceremonial copulation. The women come into
786 the ground, some decorated with feathered string headbands. All
[301] women may attend, but only those decorated and ochred are "to dance for coitus". Their special form of dancing is called *ngamamali*; they dance before the singing men. They dance the bandicoot dance, hitting their legs together to make a rhythmic sound that blends with the song and the beating sticks.

Then the head Kunapipi woman, a tribal sister or father's sister of the male leader, dances forward, leading the other women[12] back towards the main camp. As they dance along they call out, in just the same way as the men in the *djunggawon* do when they enter the main camp. And like those men, the women too symbolize Julunggul moving towards the Wauwalak. Instead of calling it Julunggul or *gundaru* as the men do, the women call it Kitjin. "But it is the same Dreaming Snake, even though it is called by a different name: for the women call it Kitjin so that we (the men) won't know the real meaning." They turn away again from the main camp and return to the sacred ground, calling out their sacred term, Kitjin! Kitjin! and warning the men: "Don't call this name, or watch us;[13] don't come
[778] close and see us, or your bellies will come up like pregnant women". And the men sit down quietly, with heads bent, for they may not look directly at the dancing women: the women are *mareiin* (sacred), just like the dancers in a totemic ceremony.

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[12] It is said that all these women are "big women", and none are young girls. No young boys are present, for the initiates are at one end of the ground "asleep", or covered up with paperbark or blankets; children are left in charge of the old women or young girls who have remained in the main camp.

This really means that the women attending the Kunapipi are married; the young girls are those who are unmarried, betrothed, or who have not yet
[881] reached puberty. We are not discussing in this context ritual defloration of
[436] young girls, as an adjunct of the Kunapipi, just prior to or on their attaining puberty.

[13] That is, the men cannot look straight at the dancing women, "we are frightened of the power they have". Actually, however, they do see them dancing forward.

The leader then erects two emblems, which she and her companion 796
have made secretly out in the bush. One is a post, consisting of paper- 786
bark bound together with twine, and resembling a smaller undecor-
ated edition of the men's *jelmalandji*: this is the Kitjin or Julunggul 778
Snake. The other emblem is a pole, sometimes red-ochred and decorated, which represents a stringy-bark tree. Both objects are stood upright in the ground, some distance from the men, who are said to be "like young boys being shown their first sacred ceremony".

Then, lifting up the Kitjin (or sometimes using another paperbark-bound object), the head woman hits the stringy-bark tree emblem, so that pieces of paperbark fly across the ground. This symbolizes the lightning sent by Julunggul while the Wauwalak were in their hut: the lightning "split" (that is, struck) a stringy-bark tree, and pieces of wood flew in every direction. It was from one of these pieces that the sacred bullroarer was made (*vide* Chapter III).

This procedure may vary in different areas, depending on the length of the Kunapipi. The women may perform their ritual further away from the men, but still near the sacred ground; and men may be forbidden to see their dancing, or the emblems they erect. After their own ceremony, they may then come on to the sacred ground and dance before the men. In some cases, too, this section is omitted.

Finishing their Kitjin dancing, they return to the *ngamamali*, and 796
form a dancing line before the men, who now look up and begin to
sing. While the women dance, various men stand up and walk over 786
to their Kunapipi partners, and hand them presents of food, string 835
or ochre; a woman will keep some of this herself, but may pass some
on to her husband. It is at this time too that much joking takes place,
and the bolder of the women (those who have gone through the
Kunapipi before) make obscene gestures, holding open their labia [832]
majora, slapping their thighs, or taking up a piece of stick and hold-
it erect like a man's penis and moving it up and down as in coitus.
When the dancing is over, the men and women return to the camp,
while some copulate[14] on their way back; although they should not
have coitus until the last night, it is generally recognized that this
does occur after such erotic dancing.

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[14] At Yirrkalla no special position is preferred during the act: this depends prin-
cipally on the couple concerned. However, the usual positions taken, in the [833]
Kunapipi rite, are as follows: A woman lies full length on the ground with
her legs apart; her partner lies between them and directly upon her, holding
her around the neck, while she clasps her hands at his back. Or the woman
may sit on the ground, well back on her buttocks, the trunk of her body
leaning back supported on her arms. Her legs are flexed and open; the man
puts his legs under her and his hands around her, so that his penis enters
further and their genitalia are closer together than if he lay upon her.

Vide Chapter V, where the special position taken in coitus on the sacred ground is mentioned and reproduced in a native drawing.

In some regions, as along the Roper River, there is the belief that a man's body may not touch the woman's during coitus. During the act he suspends

of the ground, but is careful not to look over towards his wife. 796
Both of these variations are known at Yirrkalla, but are recog- 786
nized as taking place outside their own Kunapipi area.

A man or woman will rarely refuse the ritual Kunapipi obligations 837
of having coitus, or giving and receiving presents. Their frank atti-
tude towards the question of sexual relations, and their under-
standing of the importance of such ritualized copulation, predeter-
mines their full acceptance. Moreover, there is an obvious content
of enjoyment, for both men and women are stimulated by the pre- [832]
coitus dancing and interchange of jokes. Should there be refusal,
caused perhaps by the dislike of a certain Kunapipi partner, that
man or woman is soon obliged to conform, for the thwarted partner [753]
will threaten to send Julunggul to the other and so cause sickness.

The initial incestuous relations of the Wauwalak Sisters with [773]
clansmen, as we have seen, are cited in explanation of this cere-
monial copulation.[15] There is also the deeper intent of fertility: the [789]
symbolic spiritual fructification of the Mother. There is a tendency
to regard this sexual exchange of wives as providing an element of
"danger"; for here are men and women copulating with the wives
and husbands of others, virtually under their eyes and with one [835]
another's full (that is, in theory) sanction, and in "older times" with
tabu-ed relatives. All is made possible on the sacred ground, under
the "divine" sanction of the great Ancestral Beings and the Mother.
The inclusion of ceremonial copulation in the Kunapipi is said to
"raise its status to that of *mari* (mother's mother's brother, of the
older generation)", but not to the high position retained by the
ngu:rlmak, or the *dua* and *jiritja nara* Djanggawul and Laintjung
rituals.

* * * *

On the morning following the ritual intercourse, the final group of 796
Kunapipi ceremonies is performed.

Just before dawn, all the *dua* men assemble at one end of the sacred 881
ground, and the *jiritja* men at the other. The women have returned 778
to the main camp, and the young initiates are sitting with their
guardians. All the men are painted with white paint, spraying it over [302]
one another from their mouths; and most have spears. They begin
to clap their spears, one against the other, and dance towards each
other, changing sides. The bullroarers begin to twirl at this juncture,
and the women answer their sound from the main camp. The men's [535]
dancing continues till sunrise, when the two moiety groups dance
down to the boundary between the ceremonial ground and the main [616]
camp, taking the young boys with them. Here, to the accompani-
ment of the bullroarers' sound and ritual calling, they erect the

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[15] *Vide* L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 307–8, who also provides a native interpretation of this aspect.

796 881 778 *djepalmandji* (this is a central-western Northern Territory term; the variations used at Yirrkalla are *djapalmani* or *djapanban*). Two forked posts are placed upright in the ground about six feet apart, and a thick connecting ridge pole, about four feet from the ground, placed between them, resting on the forks. This pole is hung with branches, so that the space between it and the ground is thickly covered.

Two *jiritja* snake men (mentioned before) climb on to the forked posts; each takes up his position, sitting within the fork, facing the other. The young initiates are then placed under the bushes of the *djepalmandji*, so that they are completely covered and hidden from outside view; they hold on to the ridge pole with their hands, their feet on the ground, for they are supposed to be hanging from the pole. The two *jiritja* men then begin to call out in the ritual manner known as *djangatun'jiritjiana*, moving the palms of their hands against their mouths; they are calling out for all the men and women to come to the *djepalmandji*.

The *djepalmandji* forked sticks signify not only the Kunapipi but the sacred *ngu:rlmak*, for they represent the *murlk* hut built by the Wauwalak; the initiates are put inside, like the Two Sisters. But they have also another important meaning. The two *jiritja* men (*jiritja* totemic snakes) who sit in the forks "are really the babies (although only one baby is mentioned in the Wauwalak myth)[16] of the Wauwalak". They sit in the fork, which symbolizes the uterus of the Wauwalak, and cry ritually in the same way that a child cries when issuing at birth from its mother's womb. This is one of the most important points in this terminating series of rituals; for here, symbolically expressed, is the enactment of childbirth, a crystallization of Kunapipi intent. The meaning is the same as that of the *djepalmandji* forked stick of central-western Northern Territory, which is there described as the Mother's uterus, in which a "baby" rests.

Under the cover of branches and brush, below the *djepalmandji*, are the young initiates who have passed through all the main Kunapipi ceremonies; they lie passive in the uterus (or uteri) of the Wauwalak. Soon they will be coming out, and will be spiritually re-born (that is, "their spirit comes out new"), just as the Wauwalak child was born.

The cries of the two *jiritja* men in the forks of the *djepalmandji* have summoned the women in the camp, and they make ready to come towards the place where the young boys are hidden. Behind them, within the shelter of the surrounding bush, the bullroarers are swung, "pushing along" the women and children: they are smeared

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[16] That is, each man represents the child of the elder Wauwalak sister. L. Warner, *op. cit.* p. 251, mentioned in his Milingimbi version of the same myth that each sister had a child. It will be remembered that this feature did not appear in the Yirrkalla version.

with red ochre, and dance along in the same way as did the Wauwalak 796
sisters. They reach and surround the *djepalmandji*, calling in answer
to the sound of the bullroarers; all the male dancers are hidden 881
about forty yards away in the bush. The women then leave the 778
djepalmandji and sit in a bunch some few yards distant. The sound of the bullroarers continues, and the two *jiritja* men in the forked sticks cry out. All the women and children lie down, and are covered with *barakala* bark and *ngainmara* mats. When they have all settled down, the Kunapipi headman calls out for the male dancers, who enter the ground dancing in single file and calling out *wa ! wa ! wa !* This is the call of the *dua matju* flying fox; it is used theoretically to "trick" the women into thinking that something else is meant, "but really the cry belongs to the two Wauwalak sisters; for they cried out *kei'wa ! kei'wa ! kei'wa !* when they were frightened of Julunggul coming towards their camp". That is to say, the cry *kei'wa !* is used only by women, and men cannot use it. As one informant said, "we can't yell out like women, or we might have to change our business (sacred ritual) for women's business, and they would take over ours. So we make ourselves flying fox, and then change the cry to *wa !* but all the same it is the Two Sisters crying out".

"What side is this ?" the women are said to wonder, covered with their *ngainmara*: "Flying fox side ?" "But," the men continue, "they can't get the meaning of what we do." (This, of course, is a peculiarly male attitude.)

The same men add, "But really we have been stealing what belongs 796
to them (the women), for it is mostly all woman's business; and since
it concerns them it belongs to them. Men have nothing to do really, 881
except copulate, it belongs to the women. All that belonging to those 562
Wauwalak, the baby, the blood, the yelling, their dancing, all that concerns the women; but every time we have to trick them. Women can't see what men are doing, although it really is their own business, but we can see their side. This is because all the Dreaming business came out of women—everything; only men take 'picture' for that Julunggul. In the beginning we had nothing, because men had been doing nothing; we took these things from the women". This latter is a particularly interesting statement, reiterated in the Djanggawul Myth cycle, which stresses peculiarly female attainments: the power of reproduction, and the phenomenon of menstruation.

The dancing men run forward, cry out, and run forward again 796
until they reach the *djepalmandji*; then they surround it, and the
covered women and children. The two *jiritja* men in the forks cry 881
out "like that Wauwalak child, to awaken the two sisters in their 778
hut" (that is, the cry is supposed to awaken the women who are covered with the *ngainmara*). The men all carry spears and dance around the women, prodding them lightly with the shafts, so that they "awaken" and sit up, and look towards the *djepalmandji*. They

796 see the young initiates coming out of the bushes, emerging from the
uterus, all covered with red-ochre that symbolizes "the spring blood
881 of the Wauwalak". And the men call out to the women saying, "See
778 those young men covered with the saliva of that Snake"; "but really,"
and the women are not officially supposed to know this, "they are
covered with the spring blood". The women begin to call out, and
return dancing to the main camp.

The *djepalmandji* are knocked down, and the young boys are taken to the men's camp. That night, "outside" Kunapipi songs are sung, and the men dance around the boys. Then with the men leading, and the initiates following, they all dance off in single file to the sacred ground.

Here the initiates' headbands are removed, and returned to the
Kunapipi leader for use in the next rituals. After some sacred sing-
[302] ing, all the men, together with the young boys, paint themselves
completely with red-ochre; at the same time, in the main camp, all
the other men, women and children, whether *dua* or *jiritja*, do like-
wise. On everyone's back is outlined the Julunggul Snake, "so that
[532] you can't see it". (The snake design is merged with the general red-
ochring, so that only a bare outline is visible.) This design is some-
times extended across the chest or breasts, from left to right, to join
the main snake pattern on the back; "in the beginning those Wau-
walak did this, because of that big Julunggul". This painting is
termed the "baptizing" (that is, ceremonial purification), and all are
brushed with smoking ironwood branches which have been held in
the fire.

The men return from the sacred ground to the main camp, and sitting in groups begin to sing the "outside" Kunapipi, while the women dance in the same way as they did during the first rituals. The young initiates return that evening to the single men's camp. The purification ceremony and singing may be held on succeeding evenings for about a week to a fortnight, when it is felt that sufficient precautions have been taken to prevent sickness.

This concludes the Yirrkalla Kunapipi ritual.

* * * *

773 Although we shall return in succeeding chapters to the ritual and
796 interpretation of the Kunapipi, it may be as well, at this juncture, to
survey briefly the foregoing material. It is apparent that Kunapipi
794 ritual has been closely related to the Wauwalak mythology; this
expresses symbolically the aborigines' conception of an "eternal"
[805] sequence of the seasons, and the reproductive faculties of Nature, of
which man is an incidental but dominating feature. This fundamental
[776] belief is crystallized in a Fertility Mother (the Wauwalak as a trans-
mutation of the Djanggawul) who embodies this concept, while the
male representative of fructification also is present.

● 778
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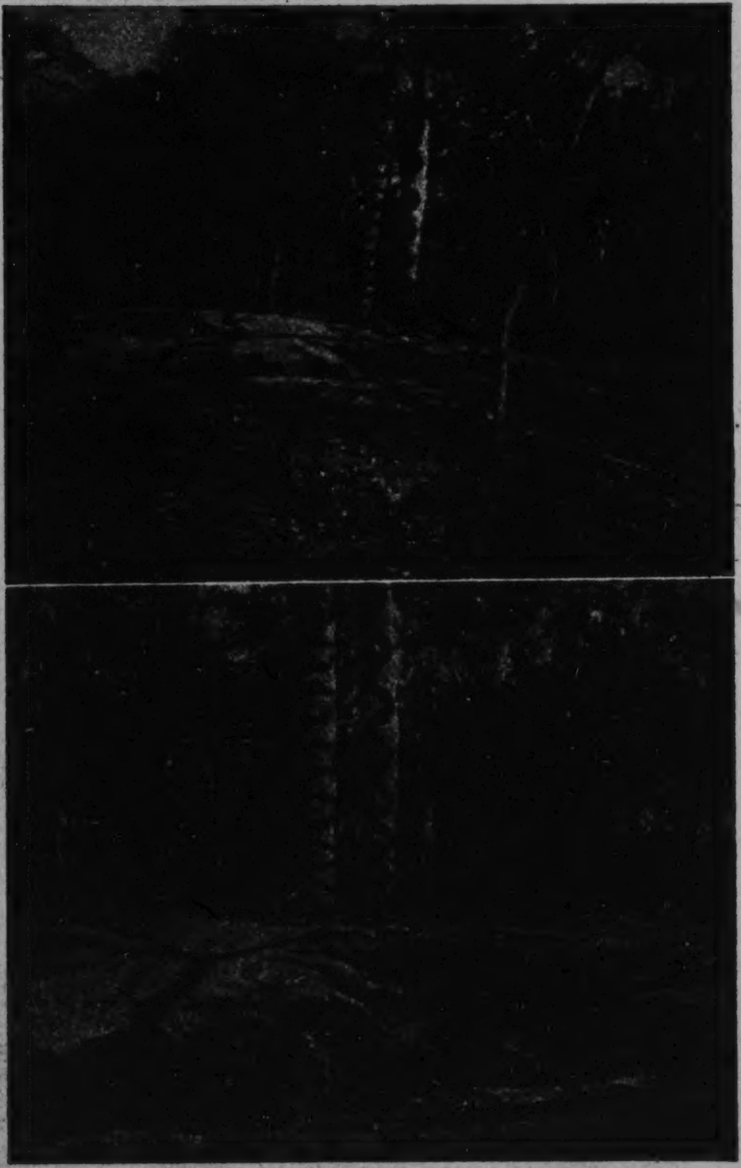

PLATE VIII

[Facing p. 80]

[For captions, see category 116, p. xi]

177 Kunapipi performances has served to strengthen native belief in its
794 efficacy; but this tendency will last only as long as do the members
797 of "the older generation".

By the driving underground, so to speak, of the Kunapipi, its
[831] sexual element has become considerably accentuated. In some cases,
ritual copulation has lost a certain proportion of its sacred aura and
serves as an excuse for promiscuity. This aspect is particularly
apparent in contact areas where detribalization has taken place, and
intensive cultural disintegration has resulted.

177 For example, on war-time Army Settlements during 1944–46 the
performance of the Kunapipi (or "Big Sunday", as it was called) was
794 forbidden by Civil and Army authorities alike, on the grounds that
778 the big religious ceremonies entailed interruption of normal work.
648 As a result of this prohibition very few of the sacred ceremonies were
carried out, although a number were performed surreptitiously some
distance from the Settlements, and were consequently of brief duration. One development of this external control was the accentuation
of sexual promiscuity through the medium of the "Big Sunday", and
the indiscriminate use of sacred tabus for the materialistic ends of a
minority. In the latter case, food, clothing, and other goods were
sometimes declared sacred, and could in this way be taken over by
the person or the group pronouncing the tabu.

Whole areas of the settlement would, unknown to the womenfolk,
be declared ritually sacred to men: latrines, washing-sheds, camps,
roads and so on were pronounced tabu-ed to women. A woman
inadvertently entering the demarcated area would be threatened with
[837] punishment, which she could avert through payment of goods or
sexual favours: usually, of course, she preferred to "pay" with
coitus.

This practice reached such proportions that Settlement officers endeavoured strongly to oppose it, and cited it as an additional reason for prohibiting the Kunapipi ceremonies; nevertheless the habit persisted, and seems to have aroused interest and enjoyment among both men and women. On the Daly River, west of Darwin, a rather similar practice has become institutionalized, in attempts to reinforce a religious life which is fast disappearing because of the disrupting effects of local European contact over a comparatively long period. Other examples, too, could be brought forward to confirm this particular distortion of "Big Sunday" religion.

But these features are abnormal; they have been brought about by
circumstances beyond the control of the natives themselves, and
represent merely one unpleasant result of uncontrolled or badly
planned contact between two widely differing cultures. They would
not normally appear, for they are not a part of indigenous religious
177 life.

794 We might well ask what is the future of a cult like the Kunapipi.

Illustrations

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Second panel, above: the *uriga*, 'young' fresh-water snake dance, postulants each holding spear and womera.

below: *djirindidi* calling of the invocations (*bugali*) on the *gararag* pole. Three men are dancing around him, invoking.

Third panel, above: tide flowing in.

below: the Sea dance, flowing water, etc.

Fourth panel, above: Flying Fox dance—two men on *gararag* pole.

below: Water dancing.

Fifth panel, above: two men dance the male and female goanna.

below: the goanna *rangga*, which is danced by the two men shown above.

band: two *mauwulan rangga*.

Sixth panel, above: wild duck dancing.

below: red parakeet dancing.

778, The *rangga* emblems are displayed on the sacred ground, while special songs relating to them are sung. 32

532 6
773

This is the central panel of a long drawing showing Jelangbara. In the lower right-hand panel, the Djanggawul Brother is holding a *ngainmara* on his thighs (this symbolizes the younger Sister, and his drawing it on to his thighs refers to the conventional position taken in coitus). He then removed *rangga* (*djuda* and *mauwulan*) emblems, shown beside and above him. 33

The younger Sister is seen in the middle of the left-hand panel, with *rangga* at each side.

The central band, with the two *djanda* goanna, represents the sacred shade.

7 *From left to right:* 33

First panel (left), above: *djuda rangga*.

below: a black bird on Gagubam Island, near Port Bradshaw. Flying foxes hanging from the sacred *djuda* tree.

Second panel (right): male and female goanna, frightened by the approach of the Djanggawul, and about to dive into the billabong at Gagubam Island.

above: two goanna *rangga* representing these two goanna, and at the extreme right are two *djuda rangga*.

Illustrations

8 The showing of the Goanna Tail *rangga*, with its parakeet-feathered pendants and decorations, by a ceremonial leader. 80 778 516

9 Postulants dancing the Incoming Tide, coming on to the sacred ground; they imitate the *rangga* folk, who emerged from the Sisters. 81 796 535

10 Invocations are called, while *jiritja* moiety postulants await the emergence of the sacred emblems. 81

11 Left hand panel: a turtle, which has entered a *ngalnmara*, after being caught by two men in a canoe; it is surrounded by waves, at Jelangbara. 96 532 773

Second panel, above: Miralaidj, pregnant, showing the long clitoris, on her arrival at Jelangbara. She holds a Goanna Tail and a *mauwulan rangga*.

below: arm-bands with feathered pendants, hanging from a rail of the sacred shade.

Third panel, above: Bildjiwuraroiju, also pregnant; she had been carrying a Goanna Tail *rangga*, but it had slipped from her grasp and fallen to the ground (below, same panel).

Fourth (right-hand) panel, above: the Brother, holding *djuda rangga* which have almost become trees; he is about to plant them.

below: the two *djuda rangga* 'copied' from those the Brother is holding.

12 A ceremonial leader representing the Djanggawul Brother after his landing at Port Bradshaw. He bends forward to taste the fresh water which gushed up after he had inserted the *mauwulan rangga*. 96 796

13 At Gumararanggu, Port Bradshaw (the Yirrkalla side of Jelangbara). Beach and sandhills are shown, with male and female goanna (*rangga*). The central panel shows an Aboriginal camp, comprising people left by the Djanggawul. 97 532

On the right-hand side, the upper panel shows the sun rising, casting its rays.

Below is Belabinja, where the Djanggawul first tasted fresh water when they landed at Jelangbara (*vide* Song 28).

14 The sacred *djanda* goanna on the sandhill at the Place of the Mauwulan (see, e.g., Song 35). 97

Illustrations

196 778 15 Calling the *bugali* invocations in front of the sacred *nara* shade, before the emergence of a totemic being. 144

16 The Goanna emblem emerges from the shade, which in this case is constructed from iron. 144

532 778 17 This design represents various sacred shades belonging to different linguistic groups. 145

Left-hand panel, top: sacred goanna on *djuda rangga* tree: the Djanggawul Brother with his *djuda* and *mauwulan* and beating sticks.

below: goanna on *djuda* tree; and sacred Goanna Tail *rangga*.

The two panels are divided by goanna tracks.

Right-hand panel, top: goanna on *djuda* tree; tracks, and sacred design.

below: goanna on *djuda* tree: one Djanggawul Sister with beating sticks, beside Goanna Tail *rangga*.

778 196 18 *Nara* postulants representing male and female Goanna. The Goanna Tail *rangga* rests across the younger man's neck. 145

19 The Djanggawul Goanna emerges from the shade. 160

20 Postulants in stylized attitudes, with the Goanna Tail *rangga*; sacred shade, at the Place of the Mauwulan. 160

778 196 534 21 Two men singing, rhythmically clapping sticks, and blowing the long, sacred Julunggul Rainbow Snake or Rock Python drone pipe, above the posturing sacred goanna of the Place of the Mauwulan. 161

22 To the rhythmic beat of clapping sticks, the Julunggul Rock Python drone pipe emerges from the *dua* moiety *nara* shade. Postulants are lying on their backs, huddled together, with the *rangga* emblem resting upon them. 161

532 773 23 Left-hand panel: Bildjiwuraroiju, Miralaidj and the Djanggawul Brother (top). The Two Sisters have long clitorises, and the Brother a long penis, which drag on the ground, and resemble *djuda rangga*. They hold goanna tail and 208

mauwulan rangga, one in each hand. People (symbolized by dots) have come from the Two Sisters: a small circle of *rangga* folk is seen dancing, among them the Two Wauwalag Sisters. 532 773

Right-hand panel, above: the Djanggawul Brother is inserting his hand into Miralaidj's vagina, and removing *rangga* folk, shown flowing from her. *Rangga* emblems are ranged beside the Brother and Sister. This took place at Dulmulwondeinbi, near Marabai.

Right-hand panel, below: Bildjiwuraroiju, opposite Miralaidj. The Djanggawul Brother has lifted aside their clitorises, and put his hand into their vaginae. People flow out, male *rangga* folk on one side, and females on the other. This took place at Jalwuljalwul.

24 *From left to right:* 208

First panel: Miralaidj as central figure; on each side of her is a woman, one (above) being her elder Sister and one (below) Bammarimarawi, her daughter and 'sister'.

Afterbirth blood flows from Miralaidj into a hole, and she stands holding two poles; as soon as the hole is filled, it overflows and runs from each side. It is after this that the elder Sister, by hitting the young Sister's hips, stops the flow of blood. Four rangga folk then come out (two men and two women).

Central panel of clapping-sticks (above), and two *mauwulan* with sacred dilly bags attached (below)—(penis and uterus symbols).

Right-hand panel, top: the sun comes up, casting its rays.

below: sunset on the mainland beyond Milingimbi, towards the west.

At Jelangbara.

25 Postulants (both Goanna actors) using the Goanna Tail *rangga* emblem; one supports it on his shoulder, while the other guides it. 209 778 796

26 *Jiritja* moiety *nara*: *rangga* are removed from the shade, and postulants dance. 209 778 796 535

27 Dancing with the *jiritja* moiety *rangga*: dust rises, as dancing feet pound the sacred ground. 224

Illustrations

796 28 Neophytes wait with heads bowed, before the showing of the sacred Djanggawul emblems. 224

778 796 29 Meditation before the sacred Goanna Tail *rangga*. Postulants caress the feathered pendants—symbolic of the sun's rays, the clitorises, foreskins or umbilical cords. 225

Map 8–9

NOTE ON ILLUSTRATIONS

126 The crayon drawings illustrated here represent only a small selection of those available, and stored at the Department of Anthropology, Sydney University. They do not show to advantage in black and white and it is hoped that later on a wider selection will be presented in colour. Only brief descriptions of each drawing have been inserted here; each drawing contains a great deal of detail, which ideally requires considerable explanation, not possible in this volume.

All these drawings were collected between 29th January, 1947 and 15th June, 1947 at Yirrkalla, in north-eastern Arnhem Land. They were done on brown paper with coloured lumber crayon and black pencil, and were used by the writer as an adjunct to his field notes. They conform to traditional patterns and representations, which would normally be drawn on stringy bark boards in coloured ochres. [532]

a woman, possessed two daughters who were later to become 773
the Djanggawul Sisters. But while the Yirrkalla myth and song
cycle do not refer directly to them as Sun daughters, many symbolic 821
references are made to the sun and to its warmth; in fact, the whole concept of the myth, with the growth of human beings and trees, and so on, depends on the presence of the Sun, through the agency of the Two Sisters. In the Milingimbi version this aspect is treated in great detail, if somewhat symbolically; one is left in no doubt as to who the two Sisters really were, and their affinity with the Sun. For example, the feathered strings from the *lindaridj* parakeet which they carried were symbolic of the sun's rays; they travelled from east to west, as the sun itself travels, and from their vulvae
the sun's rays spread, while to-day one name for the disc of the [831]
midday sun is *dagu*, *gambai* or *dala*, meaning the Djanggawul Sisters' vulvae or vaginae.

There is little doubt, then, that the Sisters, if not the Brother, 776
are projections of the Sun. If they are not Sun Goddesses themselves, they are closely linked with the Sun. The question of whether or not it is legitimate to describe certain Aboriginal Ancestral Beings as gods and goddesses raises, of course, a number of problems. Nevertheless, these particular Ancestral Beings are themselves divine in that they possess creative abilities, and are sacred in the full sense of the word. From this point of view, the appellation 'god' or 'goddess' is in order; but by using it we do not in any way imply that these Aboriginal Ancestral Beings, or the sacred emblems they brought with them, are worshipped in the
Christian sense. The concept of 'worshipping' is far removed from [782]
conventional Aboriginal religious thought: things or Beings are held in reverence, or even in awe, but never worshipped in the way that we understand the term. Our choice of a title for these Beings, however, endowed as they are with all the attributes which go to form the idea of Godhead, is primarily a matter of terminology.

These Beings brought with them to the Arnhem Land coast 773
a variety of sacred emblems, which are material symbols of their
cult. First and foremost was the *ngainmara* mat, alternatively called 778
muralmgul, *dalwuldalwul* or *wagulwagul*; the latter term applies particularly to the mat's 'mouth' or opening. *Ngainmara* is a secular
term, with *nauia* as another alternative. This mat is the symbolic [831]
uterus of either Sister, but it may also mean the whale, or simply
a mat. Its attributes were so sacred, representing as it did the Uteri 778
of the Djanggawul, that it is no longer endowed with ritual value; it has passed generally into the society, and is used primarily by women. That is to say, its sacredness was of such intensity that it could not be kept for use in ceremonies alone, but became an

178 article of everyday use. Moreover, since it is symbolically associated with females, their use of it is not incongruous. The mat, conically [285] shaped, is plaited from split and dried pandanus fibre, and usually has a fringe symbolizing the Sisters' pubic hair. Adult women and children still shelter under such mats from time to time. A [513] child, for instance, may curl up asleep beneath one, completely hidden from view; and then he, or she, may be likened to the sacred *rangga* emblems which in the mythological period were kept within the mat.

The Djanggawul brought with them, too, a dilly bag woven from pandanus fibre interlaced with red breast-feathers of the parakeet, with feathered pendants attached. This is the sacred dilly bag or spirit bag called *jelagandja*, or *mundaidjngu*. It is sacred because it is worn by men during certain ceremonies, particularly the *dua nara*, and contains part of their spirit self; for this bag is [831] also a symbol of the uterus, from which (or, alternatively, from the *ngainmara*) men and women came forth in the beginning. Waxed knobs fastened at intervals along the feathered string may contain foreskins, said to be an allusion to fertility. These bags, although highly sacred, are not kept on the ritual ground, nor are they regarded as secret. Worn by men in the camp, they are seen by all, and women too may use them at times. In fact, their making is [462] often entrusted to women, who in the Milingimbi area also prepare the beautiful feathered string (although in the north-eastern area this particular variety is made by men). It is only when the bag is almost finished that it is passed over to the men, who ritually, to the accompaniment of sacred invocation and singing, cut the loose fringe (the pubic hair or, alternatively, the clitorises of the Two Sisters)[1] and attach the red feathered pendants (the rays of the sun from the Djanggawul). The bag is then returned to the women, who complete the edging and attach the handle of jungle twine. The men who have cut the fringe, because they belong to *dua* moiety groups responsible for the *nara* Djanggawul rituals, are termed 'the Children of the Djanggawul'—like the children who came in the beginning from the sacred uteri of the Sisters (*vide* the myth and the songs).

The Djanggawul also carried with them sacred poles, known as *rangga*. These poles are very sacred; they are used only on the ritual ground, and are seen only by fully initiated men or by neophytes. Women, however, know of their existence and can describe their shape and decoration, and discuss their meaning.

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[1] The basic symbolism of this, as an umbilical cord, will be discussed later in this volume.

Significance of the Djanggawul

There seem to have been, originally, several basic types: the *djuda*, or tree *rangga*, from which trees sprang up when the *rangga* was plunged into the ground by the Djanggawul; the *mauwulan*, or stick used by the Djanggawul Brother as a 'walking stick', which he plunged into the ground so that spring water gushed forth; the *ganinjari*, 'yam' or walking stick (sometimes confused with the *mauwulan*), carried by the Sisters, and used for obtaining water in the same way;[1] and the *djanda*, or tail of the goanna, with the same function as the *mauwulan*, derived from the goanna seen by the Djanggawul on arrival at Jelangbara, Port Bradshaw. 778

These original forms have been elaborated into a variety of *rangga* emblems. They include various poles or objects of totemic *wongar* origin, related directly or indirectly to the Djanggawul; *rangga* symbolizing vulva or vagina, penis or testes; stone *rangga*, derived from a stone which was removed from the vagina of the younger Sister; and conventionalized representations of the Djanggawul themselves, for example, the *wirlgul* (younger Sister) *rangga* or the *gungwan* (elder Sister) *rangga*. All of these are decorated with clan patterns derived from those originally given by the Djanggawul[2] to the 'new generation' which emerged from the Sisters' uteri; and most have attached to them feathered string—the red parakeet feathers symbolizing the rays of the sun, the red sky at sunset, or blood from the Sisters. They are used in dancing on the sacred ground, and in posturing before the sacred shade or hut; the latter symbolizes the uterus or *ngainmara* mat, and in it *rangga* are stored just as were the first *rangga* in the beginning. Parakeet feathered string was also among the objects brought by the Djanggawul. [532 831] [531 614]

All these objects, then, have symbolic significance, and relate to the basic theme of Djanggawul ritual and mythology. This theme is fertility, manifested in the perpetually pregnant Women, the Two Sisters, in the growth of trees and foliage, in the creation of running springs, and in the abiding and life-giving warmth of the sun's rays. It reflects the Aborigines' fundamental reliance on the products of their natural environment, and their emphasis on the procreation of human and animal life, the continuance of their own species and of the food which supplies them with sustenance. They see the theme of fertility mirrored in their surroundings, and in the rhythmic sequence of the seasons, and recognize their own dependence on these and on other natural phenomena for their very being. 778 831 182

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[1] The two Sisters are also said to have urinated in various places, making sometimes small streams, and sometimes pools or wells: in the latter case, the well itself is often likened to their vaginae.

[2] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, pp. 28–41.

Significance of the Djanggawul

178 These material objects, then, such as the sacred *rangga*, bag and
mat, are focal points, or symbols, through which we may grasp
831 the significance of the concept as a whole. The mat is a uterus
182 symbol; so is the whale, although used in this sense only incidentally.
Here is the source of all life, for it was from the Uteri of the Sisters
that the first people sprang. Moreover, these Aborigines have
[842] recognized the importance of the sexual act in causing conception
and pregnancy. This natural sequence of events has many parallels
in the animal life they observe about them. Throughout the myth
[773] direct references are made to sexual intercourse, while symbolic
references in both the myth and songs are numerous. The *rangga*
poles, the yam stick, *mauwulan*, *djuda* and *djanda* are themselves
penis symbols, an interpretation made quite frankly by the Aborigines
themselves. The poles, for instance, are kept hidden within
the *ngainmara*, and removed from time to time for drying, thus
symbolizing coitus (penis in vagina as a projection of the uterus),
and drying the penis after intercourse when it has become 'wet'
with semen and vaginal juices. Or the *mauwulan* is plunged into the
earth, so that water gushes forth at its removal; this is compared
to coitus, the removal of the penis from the vagina, and the subsequent
flow of seminal and vaginal juices when the Sisters stand up
again. Waterholes themselves are vulva symbols, used frequently
[823 in Aboriginal song and mythology, while trees (for example,
824] the *djuda*) are penis symbols, and their roots are called by the term
used for penis (*vide* songs). A great deal of this erotic symbolism
is expressed in sacred ritual, in posturing and actions.

From this we see something of the importance of sexual intercourse.
831 To the Aborigines, as to us, sex and food are basic drives.
Whatever subsidiary drives exist, these two are fundamental, for
upon them human life, as they know it, depends. The Aborigines
are apt to stress the importance of the sexual drive. 'How else',
they say, 'can we continue as a group? By what other means can
we obtain food except by its natural increase?' Thus even certain
[824] forms of plant life are divided into male and female sexes. Sexual
intercourse is felt to be necessary for survival, in so far as the human
and animal world is concerned, although this survival depends
ultimately on forces beyond the Aborigines' control—on seasonal
fluctuation, and on the sun, and so we come back to the significance
underlying the Djanggawul. The Aborigines of north-eastern and
north-central Arnhem Land consequently pay much attention to
831 sexual matters, and their attitude towards this subject is one of
842 utmost frankness.[1] To them, sexual intercourse is an essential

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[1] *Vide* Introduction to *Sexual Behaviour in Western Arnhem Land* (R. and C. Berndt), Viking Fund Series in Anthropology, Yale University, 1951. No 16.

preliminary to pregnancy. Children in this area, for instance, are 831
called *judu* (*jutu*, usually employed in a singular sense), or *djamarguli* 842
(plural). The former word means 'semen'; that is, the child originated
from the semen. The latter means 'through (or from) work'; to
'work' (*djama*) a female is to have coitus, and *djamarguli* is literally
the 'result of working (or coitus)'.

Erotic references, then, in the Djanggawul cult merely conform 831
to the accepted pattern. To say that the Aborigine is concerned
unduly with the subject of sex, and derives a morbid satisfaction 182
from constant direct or symbolic reference to it, it to distort the 794
actual position. He is frankly interested in the workings of the human body, and in the satisfaction of its basic needs; and he recognizes the fundamental importance of the act, not only in ensuring the continuation of life, but also in helping to stabilize relations between members of both sexes, through their very interdependence. It is not unexpected, therefore, to find manifestations of this interest in Aboriginal religious emblems and mythology, ritual and song. Indeed, what more obvious means of expression could a simple group of people have? Here, in the Djanggawul doctrine, are crystallized their hopes and desires, related to their fundamental drives, co-ordinated with the natural resources and phenomena and with the environment which they know.

Numerous references are made to the removal of the *rangga* 778
from the *ngainmara*, a symbolic allusion also to the removal of
children from the wombs of the Sisters: for *rangga* are likened 773
to children, or human beings, and men and women may use this 182
term to refer to their bones. The spiritual content of the bones is the same as that of the sacred *rangga*, and has, moreover, been passed on from their ancestors—those who were originally removed from the Sisters. When, for example, postulants enter the sacred hut (= *ngainmara* = uterus) on the ritual ground, they are like
rangga being hidden away within the *ngainmara*. In a polygynous [595]
marriage, too, the wives are said to be like *rangga*: their husband
has collected them into a group, and has a monopoly over them as
a man has over his individual *rangga*. This likening of women to [562]
sacred *rangga* is interesting, but probably derives from the fact that
women themselves are said to be the source of ritual knowledge,[1]
and consequently sacred.

There is much stress, too, on the maternal qualities of the 831
Djanggawul Sisters, although the Brother himself is of considerable
importance. The Two Sisters are mentioned far more frequently, 776
particularly in the Milingimbi version of the cycle, although this

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[1] *Vide* Chapters 2 and 3. (See also M. Mead, *Male and Female*, London, 1950, pp. 102–3.)

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1. Postulants emerge from the sacred shade, carrying emblems.

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2. Embracing the *rangga* emblems on the sacred ground.

[Facing p. 16]

Significance of the Djanggawul

796 neophytes, and, 2, those shown only to the older, fully initiated men who are intimately acquainted with all phases of the *nara* and of the Djanggawul doctrine. These latter rituals, involving meditation and theological discussions, are the most impressive of all. At this time, too, the sacred feathered string is removed and
[616 presented to members of the opposite moiety, as well as to younger
431] members in the right line of descent from the ceremonial leaders; that is, a *gudara* (sister's daughter's son) gives to a *mari* (mother's mother's brother) or vice versa.

796 *j.* This is followed, soon afterwards, by sacramental eating of the sacred cycad palm nut 'bread'. All the preparation of this
178 'bread' has been undertaken by the women. It is taken out to the sacred ground where it is sung over, and the sacred *bugali* invoked. All the *bugali* of the country through which the Djanggawul passed, as well as their *rangga*, are called. The actual partaking of the 'bread' may be accompanied by the removal of feathered strings from the *rangga* emblems. This symbolizes the meeting of the Djanggawul with Buralindjingu at Dambojowoi (*vide* myth) when, after the Sisters had had their clitorises foreshortened (that is, the removing of the feathered strings from the *rangga*), they were treated as *galibingu* novices, and palm nut 'bread' was eaten sacramentally. But sacred 'bread' has an additional significance. It is a symbol of all food resources; and when the sacred *bugali* are invoked over it, it becomes possessed of a sacred quality which approximates it to a *rangga* emblem. The eating of it (as a *rangga* emblem) means that initiates are absorbing the sacred qualities of their *rangga* becoming themselves 'more *rangga*', more fully absorbed into the Djanggawul ideology. Symbolically they enter (*rangga* = people) the uteri of the Sisters, so that they may subsequently be re-born, when they leave the sacred ground and terminate the *nara*. The eating of the bread creates a strong sacred bond of friendship between all participants: they become as one.

There are, however, many restrictions relating to the eating of this bread. Not all initiates eat from the same bread, but all those eating must be closely related to one another; for *bugali* names have been 'sung' into the bread, and their power remains in it, and cannot be indiscriminately passed around.

796 After final painting of initiates' bodies, the *nara* is brought to a close.

796 We see from these examples that ritual is the outward expression of the Djanggawul myth. It is primarily a re-enactment of the
182 principal features of the Brother and Sisters' original journey through north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land, and an

The Djanggawul Myth

773 At Bralgu, as they walked around with these, they left grooves in the ground from their dragging. And when the Djanggawul 831 Brother had coitus with his Sisters, he lifted aside their clitorises, entering them in the usual way. He was able to have incestuous relations with his Sisters, because at that time there were no marriage rules, no moieties, and no prohibitions. Djanggawul was the lawmaker. There is, however, no mention of Bralbral's having sexual relations with the Two Women. Djanggawul had been having coitus with Bildjiwuraroiju for a long time; her breasts had grown large and 'fallen down' with milk, and she had produced many children. Miralaidj, though, was quite young, having just passed puberty, and her breasts were rounded and firm.

They lived at Bralgu for some little time, putting people there, and leaving 'Dreamings' in the form of totemic designs, sacred emblems and body painting. They also instituted their rituals and ●[778] ceremonies. The Brother's penis and the Sister's clitorises were sacred emblems, like *rangga* poles.

773 At last they made ready their bark canoe, and loaded it with 'Dreamings', sacred drawings and emblems; the latter were kept in a conically-shaped *ngainmara* mat. When all this was ready they themselves, with their companion Bralbral, climbed into the canoe. Then they paddled out to sea,[1] leaving the island of Bralgu far behind. For days and days they paddled, until they sighted the Arnhem Land mainland. At last they came to it, landing near Rose River. But they soon left this part of the country, and continued paddling along the coast until they reached Jelangbara, Port Bradshaw.

Near Gangudoi Island, while still in their canoe, the Ancestral Beings saw some trees,[2] in the branches of which were perched two *lindaridj* parakeet, drying themselves in the first rays of the sun. As they passed this island, the *djigai* morning pigeon was crying. 'Maybe that bird is crying out on the land,' said the Djanggawul, and so they sang about it. They saw, too, trepang on Bauwuling (or Bauwijara) Islands, and there were many *lindaridj* on Gagubam. A black cockatoo, immediately it caught sight of them, flew over [778] to what are now the sacred sandhills near Ngadibaulwi (or Ngadibalji) rocks.

As the Djanggawul were nearing Port Bradshaw, and while [778] they were still paddling, they could see the white foam from waves breaking around the sacred rock of Gulbinboi, just outside the entrance to the bay. As they looked they saw, too, myriads of small

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[1] It is said that they came on the crest of a huge wave, but Part 1 of the Song Cycle seems to contradict this.

[2] There are no trees on this island now.

lindaridj parakeets flying over the mainland, the sun's rays catching the redness of their breast feathers. There was a constant roar of waves pounding on the beach. They paddled farther into the bay, coming to the Garingan rock, and saw the wide curving beach of Jelangbara. They sang with joy, and allowed the surf to take their canoe into the shallow water. 773

Then they dragged their canoe on to the beach and unloaded it, making this a sacred place. Jelangbara is the largest Djanggawul centre in north-eastern Arnhem Land and, to-day, the most important. [778]

Here the Djanggawul Brother wished to shorten his Sister's clitorises. But the elder Sister said, 'No, wait till we reach Arnhem Bay. We can have a good rest, and put Dreamings there.' So they walked around, still dragging the clitorises ~~and~~ elongated penis, leaving marks on the ground which may be seen to-day.

Leaving their canoe, the Djanggawul walked along the coast until they came to Ngadibalji, where they saw the *djawuldjawul* mangrove bird. Here too the Djanggawul Brother left his hairbelt, but retained the parakeet-feathered waist-band and arm-bands he was wearing. The hairbelt is now a long sandhill. On the sandhill, were track marks of the *damurmindjari* (*damburindari* or *waburunggu*) wild duck; these birds were eating the *murnji*, or wild peanut roots. On the opposite side was a large barren sandhill, on the surface of which were tracks of the *djanda* goanna, as well as of many birds. A *gamaru* tree with non-edible 'apple'-like nuts was growing there too. This tree is sacred; it is a *jirijiri* bullroarer tree,[1] and to-day only those who are very old may look upon it. Here the Djanggawul paused and heard again the cry of the *ngadili* (*dangadilji* or *rirambung*) black cockatoo. Here too is the sacred waterhole, *milngur*, which the Djanggawul made by inserting the *mauwulan rangga* pole: a spring flows from it down to the beach. It is said that the four Beings entered this hole, and made their camp within. [823] [778] [778]

Later, they walked farther along, and saw two *djanda* goanna resting on the peak of a sandhill. 'Ah,' said the Brother, 'I am very surprised to see this goanna. I had better put it Dreaming (*wongar*) for this country.' *Bangguli* is the goannas' 'inside' sacred name. The goanna crawled up the smooth surface of the sandhill, dislodging the sand. It attempted to climb on to the sacred *djuda* pole (that is, tree) the Djanggawul had placed there, but could not do so, because the Djanggawul were still there. To-day the *djuda* ironwood (or 'black' bark) tree is still there, at Mauwulanggalngu, where it grew from the sacred *rangga*. [824 778]

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[1] The connexion with a bullroarer is not clear, for this object is not now used in the *dua nara* ceremonies, but only in the *kunapipi*. *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters III and IV. [534]

calling out in the early morning. After this they heard 'people and 773
children' crying; and here spirit footprints of children may be seen on the rocks. These are the spirits who are as yet unborn, and remain in the uterus of the elder Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju. After leaving Gagubam the Djanggawul passed Bauwuling (or Bauwijara) where they saw *bauwaldja* catfish swimming after small fish and *bunabi* trepang slugs. And above Bauwuling, in the fresh water well on dry land, surrounded by mangroves and salt water, was *biabia* refuse from the trepang.

After spending some time in the Port Bradshaw country, establishing sacred sites, they decided to walk down the beach towards Caledon Bay; but there were so many totemic folk in those parts that they again got into their canoe and paddled down to Gambuga(wi) at Caledon Bay, in territory of the Karlpu linguistic group. There they are said to have made a sacred place, and put special *djuda*. These were *rangga* emblems which, with others, they had carried from Bralgu in the *ngainmara* mat, and trees sprang up as they were pushed into the ground.

When they had done this they looked up, and saw a big dry weather cloud or mirage, called *wulma*. It was coming from Buguwolumiri, in the country of the Djapu linguistic group, towards the 'bottom' (or southern part) of Blue Mud Bay; so they travelled towards that place, and put more dreamings there. Their clitorises and penis were still dragging on the ground.

Then they saw another *wulma* towards the 'top' of Blue Mud Bay, at Bugalji, in Djarlwak linguistic group territory. They paddled around the coast to that place, and left dreamings there. Then, abandoning their canoe, they went on foot through the bush until they came to Balimauwi; this is also in Djarlwak country, on the northern side of Rose River. They made a big camp, building a
number of different 'shades' or huts, which to-day are paperbark [824]
trees; and there they also placed many dreamings.

Thus through the greater part of the country about Port Brad- 773
shaw, below Jelangbara almost to Rose River, all along the coast 778
and even a little way inland, the Djanggawul left special drawings
symbolically related to themselves and to totemic beings. They 794
left, too, sacred *rangga* emblems, such as the *djuda*, the *djanda* (goanna) and *mauwulan* (associated with water springs), as well as sacred baskets. At all those places, moreover, they established their cult, with the singing of songs and the ritual of the *dua* moiety *nara* ceremonies.

While at Balimauwi, they looked up into the north western sky 773
and saw a great *wulma* hanging over Ngaluwi ('inside' name Waguralgu) at Arnhem Bay, in the territory of the Ngeimil and

113 Dadawi linguistic groups. The Djanggawul eventually reached this place and made a camp, putting many dreamings there. They made a fish trap and caught many fish to eat. They also put the wild banana palm, and Djanggawul with his *mauwulan rangga* poked holes in the ground from which water flowed.

After a time they left Ngaluwi, walking along until they reached Gulugboi(wi), where they made a big 'shade'. They pushed their *djuda* into the ground, and trees sprang forth; and they put the *banggada* plants there.

At Daramur (or Darar'woi), inland from Arnhem Bay, the Djanggawul saw a *djanda* goanna in a fresh-water swamp that was covered with wild banana *dara* leaves; this was in Ngeimil territory.

Farther on at Mingu well, also in Ngeimil country, a *djanda* emerged from an open well which contained partially submerged banana foliage: new shoots had come up, completely covering the surface of the water.

Passing on to Djaddjananggu (also Ngeimil), they found a swamp where they saw *warugai* or *marabinj* fish; here too they saw lily roots and foliage, with flowers, and many ducks. Close by was the Maijulwi billabong where the *dadam* lily, with its round edible bulbs, was growing in great profusion. The Djanggawul Brother
●[778 himself declared part of Maijulwi sacred, so that to-day only two
562] tracks, one at each side, lead down to its banks; women may go down one of these only to get water, and must always return by the same road.

Continuing on, the Djanggawul reached Nganmaruwi, where they erected another large 'shade'. During all the time they had been on the Australian mainland, there is no mention of the Brother's having coitus with his Sisters; but while they were living here, he said to Bildjiwuraroiju, 'I want to copulate with you, Sister.'

But the elder Sister was shy. 'Why?' she asked him.

'I want to put a few people in this place,' the Brother replied.

So he lifted her clitoris, and inserted his long penis. He did the same with Miralaidj. So they continued living there, and he copulated as a husband does with his wives.

After some time, Bildjiwuraroiju became pregnant, and her Brother said to her, 'Sister, may I have a look at you?'

'What for?' she asked.

'Because I want to put some people in this place.'

'All right,' she replied. She opened her legs a little, resting her clitoris on her left leg. The Brother sat before his Sister and placed his index finger into her vagina, up to the first joint.[1] Then he

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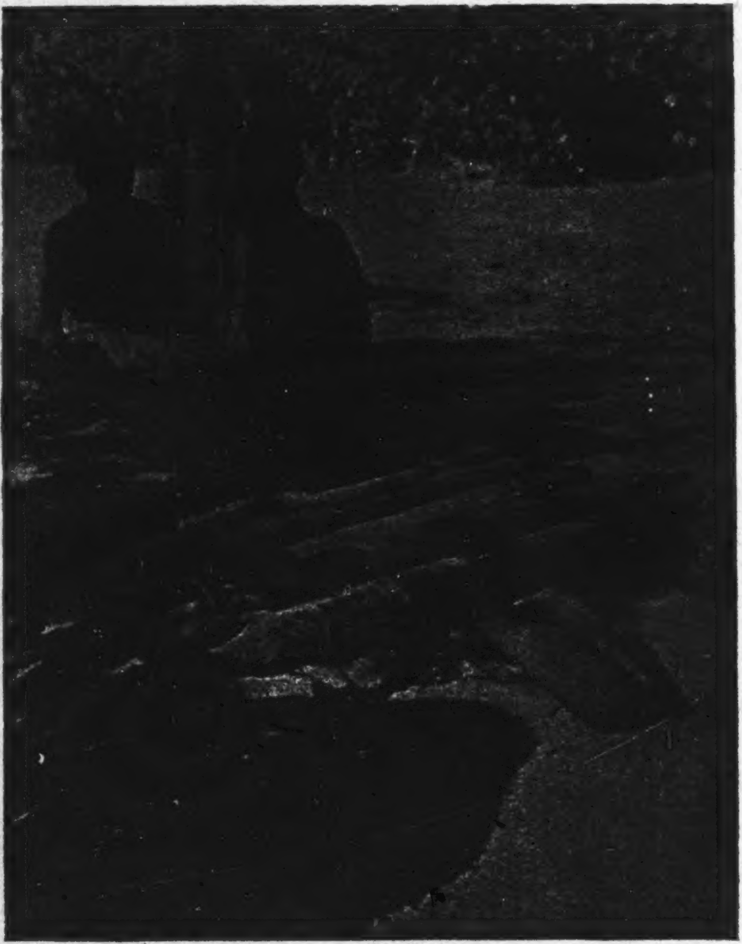
[1] Tip of finger, *darir*; from tip to first joint, *dariribulungun*.



5. *Rangga* emblems displayed on the sacred ground.

[facing p. 32]

113 Brother examined the clitorises of his Sisters, wanting to shorten them. But they would not allow him to do so. 'No,' they said, 'we will go farther on, for we must first fill up this country with people. It is a bit cold here, too; it is better that we should have warm country where we cut our long clitorises.' So they left Maidjalngari behind them and came to Gulibangaru, also in Djambatpingu country. There they saw and sang about the *gabila* mangrove 'nail' fish, from which the place takes its name.

They waded in the water among the mangrove roots, trying to catch these fish by blocking channels with their hands. The 'nails' of the fish pierced the Sisters' hands and opened them (*gonglaidjung*)[1] so that the blood ran. So they sang about the fish, and the running blood.

They left this place, and came to Mialbungara ('inside' name, [118] Marabai), where they put a number of sacred dilly bags: Marabai is one of the big sacred places of this region.[2]

'Look, Brother,' said the Sisters, 'I think we can leave these dilly bags in this shade; and we can put all the dreamings in here, because it is a big country.'

'Yes,' the Brother replied. 'I am pleased to hear that.'

So they hung up the dilly bags, first one belonging to the Riradjingu, then the Dadawi one in the middle, and the Djambatpingu one at the end. Then they camped in their sacred shade, and the Djanggawul Brother put his hand, up to a point (termed *malnguraga*) between the knuckles and the wrist, into the elder Sister's vagina. He withdrew a great number of children. A lot of people came out, men, women and children, and they were all crying; there were big groups of them. Then the Djanggawul made three shades, one for each of the three linguistic groups mentioned above, and an additional one for the Djarlwak. While they were living there, the elder Sister said one day to the younger, 'We had better put our dilly bags in this shade, and leave them here for a while.'

'What are we going to do?' asked the other. 'If we put them here, what then are we going to do?'

'Well,' replied the elder Sister, 'we can look around for mangrove shells.'

So they both left their camp to collect *mingaul* and *waluwon* shells.

While they were away, the Djanggawul Brother and his companions, men who had come out of the Sisters, but called the

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[1] Some versions say that the fish 'cut' the Sisters' hands, dividing the fingers and thumbs, whereas before the fingers of each hand had been joined together.

[2] The Two Sisters took from Madi to Marabai one woman, whose name is unknown Between Madi and Marabai are many wells, made by the *mauwulan* of the Djanggawul.

the warmth of the sun, which made it possible for all things to live 773
and grow. 831

Apart from the significance of the myth as a whole, there are several interesting features. Throughout this version the incestuous relations of the Djanggawul Brother with his Sisters are acknowledged, and repeatedly mentioned. It is said that when the Djanggawul roamed Arnhem Land, there was no marriage system. The Djanggawul themselves possessed no moieties; it was only later, when their adventures became a matter of mythology, that they were classified as belonging to the *dua* moiety. Informants point out that the Djanggawul made their own laws, and are acknowledged as law-givers. It was through their incestuous intercourse that the Two Sisters were able to produce human beings, to populate the country through which they passed. Even at that early period, the [842]
importance of sexual intercourse in relation to pregnancy must have been realized, for the part the male plays in this activity is heavily stressed: the emphasis is such that it cannot be a mere projection of present-day knowledge.

Later in their travels, however, when the Djanggawul arrived at Blue Mud Bay and also at Elcho Island,[1] the Brother seems to have altered his attitude towards incest, and to have 'punished' his sons, by circumcision, for having coitus with their sisters.

It was, nevertheless, the Djanggawul themselves, answerable to 773
no one, who determined their own law, and continued to cohabit together. The present marriage rules of local Aborigines are said to have been instituted by the Djanggawul; apart from sacred ritual, they created and gave to their people the complete structure of their social organization, with its associated culture. Some Aborigines, however, while acknowledging the primary importance of the Djanggawul, hold that other Ancestral Beings and Spirits were responsible for instituting certain features. Other religious cults have indeed come into being, among them the important Laintjung-Banaitja constellation. The Djanggawul, however, are considered responsible for establishing the fundamental pattern of this Aboriginal society.

To-day, when that society and culture are taken for granted by 773
its members, the major importance of the Djanggawul lies in their
sacred ritual and in their doctrine, which, regarded superficially, 182
comprises merely the outline of their travels around the Arnhem 778
Land coast. Underlying that story, however, is a vast wealth of 796
symbolism and allusion, which will become more apparent after we have presented the great song cycle. It is this symbolism which is expressed in sacred ritual to-day, finding expression in song and

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[1] *Vide* Footnote 3, p. 45.

113 182 178 196 dance, and in the *rangga* emblems and sacred baskets. The *rangga* poles, although modern in manufacture and decoration, are still the 'same' as those used by the Djanggawul, and contain the very spirit that possessed them in that mythological time: they retain the sacred aura of the Djanggawul.

113 There is no explanation in the myth for the elongated penis and clitorises of the Djanggawul,[1] except that this special feature makes them unique among Ancestral Beings and Spirits of this area. When they had been cut, the severed fragments were treated as *rangga*, or as feathered pendant strings. Some informants insist that the original *rangga* mentioned in the myth were actually the genitalia of the Djanggawul.

113 304 Another interesting point raised in the myth is that the Sisters, when having their clitorises cut by their Brother,[2] were treated as circumcisional novices. Immediately afterwards followed the circumcision ceremony at Elcho Island, said to be instituted by the Djanggawul Brother himself. To-day, however, no circumcision ceremony is associated with the *dua nara* rituals; this feature is relegated to the *djunggawon* and *mandiela*, sponsored by the Wauwalak mythology.[3] The *dua nara* is not age-grading as the myth suggests; but since these rituals appear to be more purely indigenous than, for example, the Wauwalak ceremonies, it is possible that they were originally designed for this purpose. In the course of time the initiatory elements have disappeared from the ritual, but remain in the myth; and to-day the ceremony is revelatory in function.

113 Some inconsistencies appear in the myth, but this is not unusual in mythology which has been handed down through the generations by word of mouth. It is something which must be considered: we must allow for differences in theme, for a variety of versions, and for a considerable range in interpretation. Mythology presented verbally in story or song, no matter how conventional the structure of the society, shows a certain amount of flexibility, since the only means of presenting, and thus of preserving it, must be the individual members of that society. The narrator of a story may stress some particular aspect, elaborating it perhaps to the detriment of others. This process, gradual as it is, has cumulative effects; when, as apparently here, it has been continuing for centuries, we may suppose that the myth, for example the Djanggawul, has altered considerably from its original form. This must be taken into account in our analysis of the myth, and in our interpretation of its meaning.

The fact that the Aborigines pay so much attention to tradition may serve to minimize the number and extent of such alterations 173 and deviation, as found in their mythology. On the other hand, especially on the north-eastern coast of Arnhem Land, these people have been subjected in varying degrees to the infiltration of new ideas.[1] Their society, or for that matter their culture, has not remained static through the ages, while they were experiencing [177] various forms of alien contact. Without elaborating on the subject here, however, it seems safe to say that, whatever the extent of past alien contact in Arnhem Land, the majority of these Aborigines appear to have retained, as far as we can tell, the fundamental elements of their traditional outlook. Even if the Djanggawul saga has been considerably altered from its original, we have now no means of discovering what that original was like. We must, then, be satisfied with what knowledgeable Aborigines tell us to-day, learning their interpretations, and the apparent intent of contemporary *nara* rituals.

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c* and IV.

[2] The symbolic significance of these has been treated in the Song Cycle.

[3] *Vide* R. Berndt, *op. cit.*, Chapters I *c* and IV.

The original theme of the Djanggawul was possibly similar in many points to its modern counterpart, for the basic theme of fertility is heavily emphasized, and constantly expressed in symbolism: and symbols to these people provide the material basis upon which they have elaborated their religious thought and ritual.

We shall return to this point in a later chapter. At present we are concerned with inconsistencies; and a possible explanation for these may be found in the fact that tradition, orally transmitted, is not static, but is inevitably dependent on individual variability.

The most obvious inconsistency arises from the statement, at 173 the beginning of the myth, that before the arrival of the Djanggawul in Arnhem Land there 'were only land and sky, animals and birds, foliage and trees . . . and beings of totemic origin.' The Djanggawul, we are told, were responsible for the creation of human beings as we know them to-day. Throughout the myth, however, mention is made of other people, as well as Spirits, with no indication of their having sprung from the Djanggawul. It seems then, that, in addition to totemic beings, there were others who came into contact with the Djanggawul. Aborigines say that before the Djanggawul came there were only 'bird people in the land'; the latter may be taken to mean 'totemic beings' of animal, bird, reptile, fish or vegetable origin. Again, although these natural species 173 were present, the Djanggawul are said to have 'made them *wongar*, 778 or 'dreaming'. 'Dreaming' is totemic in the sense of being specially

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[1] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*; and also R. and C. Berndt, 'Secular Figures of North-Eastern Arnhem Land,' *American Anthropologist*, 1949, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213–22, with plates.

113 118 possessed of an aura, or spiritual substance, which has been directly obtained in 'the beginning' (that is, in the mythological era) from the Creative Beings (for example, the Djanggawul). The concept of *wongar*, then, rests on the fact that a particular natural species came into association with an Ancestral Being, and was declared sacred by that Being: it became incorporated in the mythology related to that Being, and through this divine connexion became totemic. This process seems to account for the majority of such *wongar*. For example, the Wauwalak tried to cook some animals and vegetables in their fire, at the sacred billabong of Muruwul; but these sprang from the ashes and rushed away, diving into the waters of Muruwul and becoming *mareiin*, sacred, as well as *wongar*.[1] When the Djanggawul reached Arnhem Land, however, they found that some *wongar*, mostly belonging to the *jiritja* moiety, had preceded them. The concept of *wongar*, of course, is not confined to the natural species; it includes all natural phenomena and physiographic features, as well as human beings, in most cases Spirits who through divine association have become *wongar*.

Now the Djanggawul, of super-human ability, making their own laws, creating their own pattern of behaviour, and possessing the power of giving life, were in no sense *wongar*, although the term *wongar* is used loosely in referring to them. They were not in any way totemic, and this is an important distinction. Totemism is merely incidental to them; it is a philosophy embedded in the traditional religion, and not a religion itself. Totemism seems to be an instrument wielded by these Beings to express focal points in their religious ideology, and used extensively to provide symbolic representations.

113 The Djanggawul, on arrival at Port Bradshaw, were thrown into immediate association with the *jiritja* Beings, Laintjung and the Baijini.[2] Laintjung is the *jiritja* male counterpart of the Djanggawul; he, with his son Banaitja and certain associated females, is often said to have been responsible for bringing into being the ancestors of the *jiritja* moiety people. This aspect has never been treated in such detail in the *jiritja* scheme of creation as it has in the *dua*; nevertheless, Laintjung himself was not totemic, but was creative in the same sense that the Djanggawul Brother was. Laintjung, then, is legitimately contemporaneous with the Djanggawul; but

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[1] *Vide* R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

[2] *Vide* R. and C. Berndt, 'Sacred Figures of Ancestral Beings of Arnhem Land', *Oceania*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, pp. 309–26, plates and figures; 'Secular Figures of North-Eastern Arnhem Land', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 51, No. 2, pp. 213–22; A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, pp. 28–31; and R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapter I *c*, as well as *Arnhem Land—Its History and Its People*.

The Content of the Myth

The rôle of women in sacred ritual receives attention in that section of the myth which describes their losing to the men the sacred dilly bags and *rangga* emblems. This has considerable bearing on the concept of what is rightly sacred and what profane; the theory that women are profane because they do not take an active part in many religious ceremonies has been the subject of much discussion.[1] Although it is not the place here to discuss the question in any detail, a few points are worthy of notice.[2] 773 562 182 778

The north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Landers' conception of sacred life, as mentioned, encompasses all members of the society, irrespective of sex. The 'aura' of religion, as they know it, permeates all cultural institutions, from the most simple or mundane to the most complex. According to the Djanggawul ideology woman, in the shape of the Two Djanggawul Sisters, was the source of all religious ritual, a fact which becomes apparent after studying the symbolism of the songs. At the same time, man's complementary part must not be underestimated. It might be suggested that because to-day the myth and associated ritual, with the songs, are now largely in the possession of men, the peculiar reproductive function of females has been more strongly stressed. It is reasonable to suspect, also, that if the Djanggawul had not lost their bag and *rangga* emblems, so that all ritual had remained in the hands of women while men continued to play a subordinate part, the emphasis would have been on the procreative abilities of the male sex.[3]

It is possible to conjecture that, by and large, members of one sex would be more intensely interested in the procreative and sexual function of the opposite sex than in their own. Whether or not the stress on female fertility was an 'original' manifestation,

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[1] *Vide* B. Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 1938, p. 464; P. Kaberry, *Aboriginal Woman, Sacred and Profane*, 1939; C. H. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, L'Homme, Cahiers d'Ethnologie, de Géographie et de Linguistique, I, Paris, 1950.

Émile Durkheim, in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, 1926, acknowledged that women's part in Aboriginal sacred life was greater than his direct references would imply (p. 138, footnote 6).

[2] *Vide* A. P. Elkin, R. and C. Berndt, *Art in Arnhem Land*, 1950, pp. 28–35, and R. Berndt, *Kunapipi*, Chapters I *c*, III and IV.

[3] *Vide* M. Mead, *Male and Female*, London, 1950, pp. 102–3, in respect of some New Guinea tribes. 'The basic theme of the initiatory cult . . . is that women, by virtue of their ability to make children, hold the secrets of life. Men's rôle is uncertain undefined . . . man has hit upon a method of compensating himself for his basic inferiority . . . Behind the cult lies the myth that in some way all of this (ritual behaviour) was stolen from the women . . . men owe their manhood to a theft . . .' This is a particularly interesting thesis, which would repay further detailed attention.

as the myth would tend to explain, it is now almost impossible to
773 tell. We can say, however, that on the authority of the myth, the
562 ritual and the songs, together with certain emphases and attitudes
182 current in contemporary Arnhem Land society, it does seem that
778 the source of this religion may be found in female fertility. At the same time the peculiar function of the male, in the sexual act and in procreation, is treated in much symbolic detail. Summing up the relevant treatment of male and female in the Yirrkalla version of the Djanggawul myth, we arrive at the conclusion that both played an equally important part. In the Milingimbi version of the same myth, however, woman's part is stressed to such an extent that the Djanggawul Brother makes no appearance at all in the story.[1]

In the myth the Djanggawul Brother and his companions brazenly stole the bags and *rangga* from the Sisters, offering no compensation in return. Their separate rôles were then automatically reversed, so that women instead of men were obliged to collect food. The crux of the situation, however, is apparent from the remarks made by the Sisters immediately after their ritual exclusion. 'We know everything. We have really lost nothing, for we remember it all, and we can let them have that small part. For aren't we still sacred, even if we have lost the bags? Haven't we still our uteri?' This is still the attitude of the women.[2] Woman herself is still sacred—not merely her procreative organs, her menstrual and afterbirth blood,[3] but herself as a member of the female sex. She did not contest the action of the Djanggawul men because her rôle in society is conventionally one of submissiveness, arising from her treatment when removed from the Djanggawul Sisters' uteri.

However, the whole problem of respective male and female sacredness is too complex for the cursory attention which is all it can receive here. To examine it in detail, from the point of view of north-eastern and north-central Arnhem Land society, would necessitate the presentation of the Wauwalak Song Cycle, an examination of *kunapipi*, *ngurlmag* and *djunggawon* rituals,[4] and a

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[1] Milingimbi version to be presented later. *Vide*, for example, L. Warner, *op. cit.* pp. 336–40.

[2] My wife's work among Yirrkalla and Milingimbi women bears out this statement. Their knowledge of sacred ritual is far more extensive than we have been led to believe, while their active participation is far from insignificant. The same holds good for certain other areas, for example, western Arnhem Land and Central-Western Northern Territory. See C. H. Berndt, *Women's Changing Ceremonies in Northern Australia*, *op. cit.*, 1950.

[3] There is a cultural stress on these features in Arnhem Land society. See *Kunapipi*, Chapter III.

[4] This has been treated briefly in *Kunapipi*, especially Chapter III.

discussion of contemporary behaviour and attitudes. Nevertheless, 773
it is one of the most important issues raised in the myth, and funda- 562
mental in our conception of Arnhem Land religion. By admitting 182
the place of women in ritual life, we extend the function of religion 778
so that it is not solely, or even partially, the prerogative of man.
Each sex has its definite and traditionally defined rôle; and by ac-
cepting this premise we realize the potential greatness of a faith
which has meaning for all the members of the society.

medium can do. In this respect they are inseparable from that 538
culture, expressing as they do something of the Aborigines' sense
of the beautiful, their feeling of strength and sureness in the essential 182
goodness and vividness of their own way of life. This is an important
point, for as these poetic songs stand to-day they represent the
achievement, not of individual men or women, but of the community as a whole. Moreover, this achievement does not belong
to any one era, but is the culminative result of centuries of effort—how many, we shall probably never know.

The songs are an integral part of the Djanggawul myth and of 733
its ritual, for these three elements are interdependent. The 538
Djanggawul myth, as set out in Chapter 2, is rarely told by a
story-teller; it is, rather, sung out, in the manner of the songs 533
presented here and in following chapters. What is more, no *nara*
ritual is performed without the accompaniment of these songs.

These songs are not merely traditional; they are also sacred, 538
because each is essentially of divine 'composition'. They set out
to describe in detail all the incidents that took place during the 533
wanderings of the Djanggawul, from the time they left their spirit 778
home at Bralgu until they reached the neighbourhood of Milingimbi.[1] There is a certain amount of repetition, beloved of the
Aboriginal song man; there are 'inside' and 'singing' words,
alternatives to those in everyday use, and a wealth of symbolic
allusions. The language of the songs is not archaic or highly [192]
specialized, as found in some areas in reference to sacred singing,
but is for the most part the ordinary language spoken by the people. This is interspersed with occasional sacred words, 'singing' words, or invocations used only in this context; but essentially the songs are constructed in such a way that all may understand them. They are sung according to a defined traditional rhythm, the words being abbreviated, lengthened or elaborated to meet the requirements of the tune, while the development of the theme proceeds graphically with the help of considerable detail.

These Djanggawul songs express the essence of ceremonial 533
behaviour, and of the relevant mythology, and through them we 182
understand the significance of the *dua nara* and of the Djanggawul
cult. To appreciate them fully, it is necessary to understand thoroughly both the ritualistic background and the mythology, in conjunction with other facets of the cultural pattern of this area. While the song is in progress, participants and onlookers alike are reminded of the intent of the ritual—but not of that intent alone, for these sacred

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[1] As mentioned elsewhere, this journey is extended in the Milingimbi version of the Djanggawul cycle.

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8. The Goanna Tail *rangga* shown by Mauwulan, a ceremonial leader.

[facing p.80]

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15. Calling invocations before the sacred shade.

16. The Goanna emblem emerges from the shade.

[p. 92a(E)]

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17. Various sacred shades, with the Djanggawul.

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18. *Nara* postulants representing male and female Goanna.

[p. 92(D)]

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19. The Djanggawul Goanna emerges from the shade.

20. Postulants in stylized attitudes, with Goanna Tail emblem.

[p. 92 (E)]

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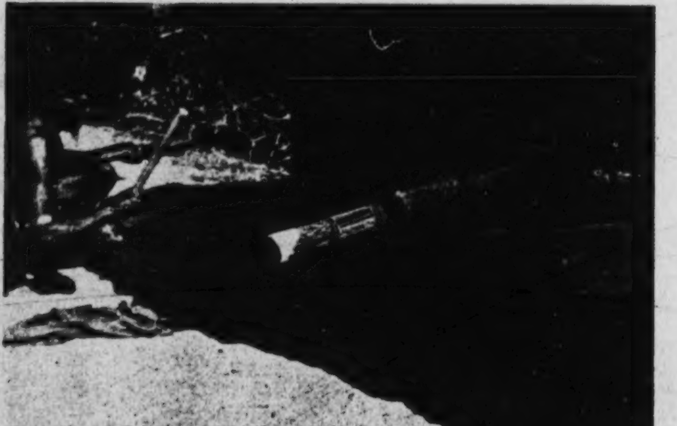
21. Clapping sticks and blowing the sacred Julunggul drone pipe, above the posturing sacred Goanna.



22. The Julunggul Python emerges from the sacred shade: postulants lie on their backs, with the emblem resting upon them.

[p. 92(F)]

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25. Postulants with Goanna Tail *rangga*.

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26. Removal of *rangga* from the *jiritja* moiety shade.

[p. 92(H)]

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27. Dancing with the *jiritja* moiety *rangga*.

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28. Neophytes await the showing of the Djanggawul emblems.

[p. 92(I)]

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29. Meditation before the sacred Goanna Tail *rangga*.

[p. 92(J)]

songs express what may be described as the spiritual quality of 182
this particular Aboriginal society. They are essentially traditional, 773
and have developed within the society as the result of group rather
than of conscious or acknowledged individual effort. The individual 533
is thus subordinated to the social conscience, in that he becomes the instrument through which they are transmitted, and through which they continue to live. The fact that he may add something to them in the course of transmission is not, here, a significant factor in this process: for if their inherent 'power', or their sacred aura, is to remain, they must retain what is felt to be their original structure in recognizable form. In this lies their essential value as documents of social thought and religious belief. Being predominantly traditional, they stem from the past; and because the concept of the 'Eternal Dreaming' is a living reality in Aboriginal life, these songs continue to retain at least the main ingredients (or what people themselves regard as the main ingredients) of their original content. Moreover, their oral transmission has been associated with special rhythms and ritual postures, and with accompanying dances, providing means of expression for the sacred thought and emotion not merely of one but indeed of many generations of Aborigines.

The Djanggawul songs and mythology comprise a body of 773
knowledge which is not restricted, in the sense of being available
to only one section of the community, but is shared by all adults 533
and (to a much lesser extent) children. For practical purposes, a 562
distinction is made between, on the one hand, the executive 184
authority wielded by the men, and on the other, the more submissive
participation of the women. Women know the content 778
and rhythms of the songs, but 'officially' they are not supposed to know the ritual or the sacred invocations, or to see the *rangga* emblems. Generally speaking, however, they do know more about these than would be suspected from conversations with men alone. A number of women have described to my wife, in confidence, various features of the rituals performed exclusively and 'secretly' by men. They have described the *rangga* emblems, and told her many of the sacred terms used in invoking. An explanation of this lies in the Aborigines' concept of sacredness, which is not restricted to the confines of the ceremonial ground. It is, on the contrary, widely diffused throughout the society, and appears to permeate
every institution and activity of the people. Women, as we have 773
seen, by virtue of their childbearing ability as symbolized by the 533
womb, possess a special sacred quality peculiar to themselves, in 562
which men may not share. However important man may be— 778
and the indispensable part he plays in conception receives much attention in the Djanggawul epic—woman has the more spectacular

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562 rôle, and the miracle of childbirth is hers alone. Upon that simple
778 but fundamental thesis much of this traditional epic is based.

Woman's participation in the *dua nara* is thus both logical and necessary. Each sex, however, has its own part to play; and the Djanggawul cycle has indicated not only the physical but also the culturally defined ritual differences between men and women.

794 In this volume, when describing the beliefs and practices associated
with the Djanggawul cycle and the performance of *nara* ritual, we
796 have purposely employed the term cult. This does not mean,
however, that it is controlled or shared by a select group, the
184 acceptance of members within the order being determined by
totemic, clan or linguistic group affinities, by status, prestige or
economic position. This is not so. The Djanggawul cult is one of
a number existing contemporaneously in this region, each having
its own mythology and associated ceremonies. All these cults are
in some degree interrelated, and all male members of the society
are eligible as active participants. Boys and young men pass automatically
through the age-grading ceremonies of the *djunggawon*,
kunapipi and *ngurlmag*. In addition to these, there are certain revelatory
rituals, which are not initiatory. The extent of a man's active
794 participation in the latter, and his eligibility for leadership, depend
796 upon several factors—for example, on his moiety and kinship
affiliations, and on whether or not the cult's mythology and ritual
554 belong to his particular linguistic group or clan, and to his father's
184 family. Such factors, however, never operate to debar him altogether,
and in many cases his relationship to the cult through his mother's
616 family may have a compensatory effect. The same conditions apply
in the case of the major religious cults, the *dua* and *jiritja* moiety
nara. All men may be accepted as initiands to the *nara* ceremonies,
and all may subsequently become neophytes; but the measure of
their active participation and leadership depends on the factors
mentioned above. Only a *dua* moiety man, belonging to the most
powerful *dua* linguistic group and clan, can rise to ceremonial
headmanship in the *dua nara*; and here, too, the principle of descent
may operate. The writer's main informants in recording and discussing
the Djanggawul songs, mythology and so on were *dua*
headmen, assisted by other men who were correspondingly 'graded'
in the ritual sphere.

533 Comparison of the myth (Chapter 2) with the Songs reveals certain
773 inconsistencies. These may perhaps stem from the fact that the
myth is an over-all sketch of the Djanggawul's journey and adventures;
it allows rather more latitude and scope to individual narrators,
and does not purport to describe various incidents in any great
detail. On the whole, it does agree basically with the Songs; but

533 is not forgotten; the original theme is recalled again and again
539 throughout the cycle. It is the sea, too, which receives much attention in the *nara* rituals (for example, in those performed by *rangga* folk, mentioned in the cycle). Nevertheless, the importance of the
[778] well waters must not be underestimated. Apart from their association with the sea and its tides, they are in their own right spirit centres; and these are sacred, for the *rangga* emblems have been put within them or within their mud, and *djudu* have been planted around them. Moreover, the well is identified with the uterus, with the *ngainmara*, and with the sacred *nara* shade.

533 539 831 The fourth theme is concerned with seminal fluid, which is symbolized by the foam of the sea, or by rough water surging from an overflowing well. It is this foam which splashes on to the *rangga* emblems and *ngainmara* mat during the Djanggawul's journey from Bralgu, staining not only these objects and the feathered strings, but also the long clitorises and penis, and leaving on them a distinctive 'sea smell'. References are made throughout the cycle to the drying of the feathered strings of the *rangga*, and of the baskets.

533 539 These elements then, with the *ngainmara* and *rangga*, provide the skeletal structure or framework of the cycle, upon which the various situations have been constructed and elaborated.

Apart from the purely human element, reflected in the removal of *rangga* folk who serve as a nucleus from which has grown the present Aboriginal population, the cycle is concerned, in its wider implication, with the universe about them. The Djanggawul are said to 'make country' as they travel. We have seen however, from both the Myth and the Songs, that the country as such was already there on their arrival. Where the Songs describe their 'making country', therefore, we must assume that they merely put additional physiographical features. They made the sacred sandhill at the Place of the Mauwulan, which is symbolically represented in every *nara* to-day; they made innumerable wells, both sacred and secular, and planted multitudes of trees; and from their *rangga* and feathered strings birds, reptiles, animals and vegetables (yams) came into being, or became totemic. The Morning Star was sent for them by the Spirit people at Bralgu, to guide them through the sea to Port Bradshaw. And the sun came up for them, driving away the darkness and lighting up the land, sending its glowing rays in every direction, and warming all it touched.

533 539 831 Apart too from the matter of human fetility, the cycle concerns the fructification of the land, symbolized in the fluctuating tides of the sea, and the rising well waters. The plunging into the ground of the *mauwulan rangga*, with water gushing forth at its withdrawal, does not represent human sexual intercourse alone; symbolic coitus

796 simply religious. Women too have their part – and a vital one – to play in the ritual life.

773 In eastern Arnhem Land, the most important of all rituals relate to the Djanggawul, a Brother and two Sisters and their companion who in the mythological era came across the sea from an unidentified country far to the north-east. On their journey (so the long song-cycle relates) they stayed for a time at an island called Bralgu, later the home of the *dua* moiety dead, located somewhere beyond Groote Eylandt. Then, on the shining path first of the Morning Star and presently of the rising Sun, they travelled in their bark canoe to land at Port Bradshaw on the Arnhem Land coast. With them they brought their special sacred objects. The Djanggawul Brother had long painted and feathered poles, of phallic significance. Some he plunged into the ground so that water gushed forth; and others, when planted, sprang into living trees. These life-giving sticks were kept hidden for much of the time in a plaited conical mat, a symbolic uterus.

As they travelled, the Sisters gave birth to many people (symbolised, again, by the sacred poles). These were the ancestors of the present-day Aborigines, for before the Djanggawul came there were only spirit beings in Arnhem Land.

At first, we are told, the Sisters alone possessed all the sacred objects, the rituals and songs, which they had brought with them from their distant homeland: the symbols they used, and their actions in dancing, centred about the important cycle of sexual intercourse, pregnancy, and birth. The Djanggawul Brother and his companion had nothing. One day therefore, while the women were out collecting shellfish, the men stole the sacred objects and took them back to their own camp, and there they began the special dancing and singing. But the Sisters, when they discovered their loss, did not protest very strongly. Now, they agreed, the men could attend to the rituals on their behalf, doing most of the "work", while they themselves devoted more time to raising their families (in the way of Fertility Mothers).

● 778 796 This division still holds in the eastern Arnhem Land today, where women play a less active rôle in sacred ritual than do their menfolk. Today, too, replicas of their sacred objects are treated reverently and surrounded with ritual and symbolism. The long poles, painted with conventional designs and hung with vividly-feathered strings, are stored in a special hut on the sacred dancing ground. From this hut, the uterus, men emerge with them to posture and dance, while women also dance in the main camp: and the ceremonies of this cycle conclude with an elaborate bathing ritual in which both men and women take part. 778 796

The Djanggawul rituals belong to the *dua* moiety. People of the *jiritja* moiety have some share in them through their mothers and mothers' brothers; but they have their own ceremonies and beliefs as well. Laindjung, a counterpart to the Djanggawul but much less important, also came out of the sea to the Arnhem Land coast from somewhere away to the east, and through his son Banaidja established his mythology and rituals. Many such Ancestral or Spirit Beings are said to have reached the north coast of Australia by sea (see Chapter 5), and perhaps beliefs of this sort reflect some early experiences of alien contact, or some incidents which served as focal points for the diffusion of alien ideas. In western Arnhem Land, too, mythology reveals a strong alien orientation — although this feature may have been superimposed in later years as a result of Indonesian intrusion. Thus the great mother Waramurunggoindju and her husband Wuraggag (now the landmark Tor Rock), like Jurawadpad and most of their contemporaries, landed at various places on the Coburg Peninsula after travelling from some far island identified, today, as "Macassar". 796 616 773 777

Nevertheless, there has been inland influence as well. The Djanggawul *nara* ceremonies, shorn of much of their mythological significance, have spread right across to the borders of Western Arnhem Land. The two Wauwalak Sisters came overland from the south to the northern Arnhem Land coast, where they inspired the three age-grading ceremonies: the *djunggawon*, associated with circumcision, and known but not performed in western Arnhem Land (where most of the tribes are non-circumcising); the *kunapipi*, more recently introduced into eastern Arnhem Land; and the *ngurlmag*, rarely performed today, with its probable origin the *ubar* hollow-log initiation rituals of western Arnhem Land. The Kunapipi has been introduced into 796 777

796 western Arnhem Land, too, coming up from the south and the
177 south-east almost to the coast near Goulburn Islands.

The north-eastern people, like their western neighbours, pay
778 great attention to the outward expression of their religious ideas, to provide a guide to ritual behaviour and to impress certain concepts on the minds of postulants. Their sacred objects do not consist only of those introduced by Djanggawul, Laindjung and other Beings. In the *nara* and other rituals many beautifully made *rangga* are used, some associated with natural species or with totemic features, others with human organs and ancestral people.
778 Usually conventionalised, they are made from hard or soft woods, cane or paperbark, sometimes bound with jungle-tree
532 twine, and decorated with clan totemic designs and colourful feathered strings. Human figures carved from blocks of wood are painted and ornamented in a similar way. Many other sacred objects are used in the Wauwalak ceremonies – the *ubar* drum of the *ngurlmag*, for example, the tall grass-bound *Jelmalandji* posts of the *kunapipi*, and the long *julunggul* "trumpets" and dancing posts of the *djunggawon*. In western Arnhem Land, religious feeling finds concrete expression in the varied shapes and designs of the *maraiin* objects, which include representations of birds and animals. Their form and workmanship are usually pleasing to the eye, but to the craftsman this is of secondary importance.[2]

Let us summarise the place of indigenous religion among the
771 people of Arnhem Land.

In Aboriginal societies throughout Australia, this religious faith has been the mainstay of social life, giving meaning and background to behaviour patterns and institutions. Most people believed unquestioningly in the essential "rightness" of their way of life. Everything was explained, each member of the community had a definite place in the scheme of things, and the future was well determined.

771 Today, however, the Aborigines find that conditions are
rapidly changing. The pressure of contact is greater now than it
178 has been in the past. Beliefs that they have held for centuries are
being questioned, and new ways and ideas are being enforced.

special value in native economy, for it enables the women to maintain an adequate food supply on ceremonial occasions when hundreds of people are gathered in one camp for weeks or months at a time, who could not otherwise be supported for such periods on local resources. *ŋätu* is also the principal food eaten in Arnhem Land on ritual occasions. After it has been received by the old men it is then dedicated ceremonially to the *räŋga*, the sacred totemic object, by the *Dälkärrämirri*, who recites aloud over it the "big" or sacred names of the totem. It now becomes sacramental food and may not be eaten or even handled by the profane, that is, by any but men fully initiated to the particular totem to which it has been dedicated. 262 262 778

Although, as was stated above, *ŋätu* can be kept, after preparation, for several days, the natives of Arnhem Land, in common with other Australian aborigines, do not store food, but are dependent for their subsistence on the result of each day's hunting. In Arnhem Land a single species of fruit, *mundjutj*, (*Buchanania Muelleri*), which is harvested in great quantity in the wet season, chiefly January and February, is sometimes spread out in the sun to dry until it becomes wrinkled and shrivelled like a prune. It is then distinguished by a separate name, *bindjitj*, from the fresh fruit, *mundjutj*. The method of preparation is as follows: After a preliminary exposure to the sun the fruit is rubbed with red ochre and again dried until it is hard and brittle, after which it is wrapped up neatly in parcels of teatree bark. In this form *bindjitj* may be stored for weeks or even months—a practice almost unprecedented among these nomadic hunting people. The subsequent preparation of *bindjitj* is carried out by pulverising the dried fruit, including the hard seed, with pounding-stones, wetting both fruit 251 [222] 252

224 kinship, with due regard to certain ritual observances, such
262 as restrictions and tabus. The game may then be warmed
602 on the hot embers, and shared out among those members
of the family who are permitted to eat it, that is, among those
whose status in relation to the social group, in initiation, or
to the man who killed the kangaroo, does not place him or
● [778] her under a tabu. The flesh of any kangaroo or other game
which is killed with a spear or other weapon which is
yarḵomirri (lit. "having a name") that is, which has been
dedicated to a sacred clan totem, is also sacred, and may
be eaten only by members of the restricted group comprising
the fully initiated members of the clan. On these occasions
[887 when the food or game is tabu, the division of the quarry
616] is in the hands of the old men of the clan, or more particularly,
the men who apply the term *ŋandi* (mother)—
reciprocal term *wäḵḵu*—to the clan concerned, to whom
it is *yindipulo*. The traditional rights of these men take
precedence even over those of the hunters who killed the
quarry. The men who officiate in these divisions of food or
game, as on most ceremonial occasions, are by kinship
status necessarily members of the opposite moiety.

431 In addition to hunting, and to the elaborate and exacting
462 ceremonial life in which every man plays a part, and which
occupies much of his time, he must make and maintain
his own spears, spear-throwers and fighting weapons. It
will be seen later, that a man may actually acquire some
of his spears and other weapons as gifts by ceremonial
exchange. But as he also incurs an obligation to send spears
[461] to others within this system, such gifts do not actually
relieve him either of the work or the responsibility of spear-making,
but rather give him an incentive, an urge, to work
and to devote the necessary time to the manufacture of fine
weapons in order to maintain his prestige within the
CEREMONIAL EXCHANGE SYSTEM.

is no pooling of resources; each collects food independently, 222 512
working for her own family or family group. And again,
as they travel, the women gather any materials they chance
to find which may be of use later, in technology. In this 222
way the people accumulate a reserve of string, fibre, (in 237
various stages of manufacture), resin, bone for making of 314 512
yam knives and awls, for domestic use, or for canoe and
bark trough manufacture, and all the materials regularly
used in technology. These are carried in the *bäti*, generally [492]
in the form of neat parcels wrapped in *bärrukälla*
(*Melaleuca* bark). When the men make a chance visit to [431]
an area famed for its spear woods, pigments, or other [317]
special material, they gather this and carry it in reserve, for
later gift or exchange purposes. Similarly, feathers or down
(*rämmän*) of birds are collected, and *bulnyin*, the fur of
the Brush-tailed Possum, which is valued also for ceremonial purposes, is stripped before the animal is cooked.
The spines (*dimir*) of stingrays are also extracted and all
materials useful for technological and ceremonial purposes
are removed while an animal is being prepared, wrapped
in neat parcels in paperbark and placed in the dilly bag
until required for use. As this material is generally carried 461
by the natives in their baskets when they are hunting, they
are able to make use of any moments of leisure during a
halt, or while food is being cooked, to repair and maintain
implements and utensils.

Certain materials, particularly the fat of *kärritjämbäl* the 237
Red Kangaroo, and of a few other animals, and the fat and [435]
feathers of some birds, chief of which are the Emu, Plain 778
Turkey or Bustard, the Jabiru and Native Companion,
which are difficult to approach, have a high "social value"
and are greatly prized. These materials have a ritual sig-

237 nificance and *must* be accumulated by the hunter.[15] This
778 fat, as well as the feathers of the birds mentioned above, are
known as *tjärnbin* and play an important part in the
ceremonies called *kunabibbi* and *ŋulmark*. The long
bones, bills and some of the flight feathers of these birds
are also accumulated and wrapped with paperbark into
neat parcels called *täbarr*.

264 About midday, or at the conclusion of a drive for game
512 or fish, the people look for a suitable place to make a fire
and to cook such small game as opossums, bandicoots,
native cats, "goanna" or fish, as they may have secured. If
they are hungry, some vegetable food may also be cooked,
but the principal meal of the day is eaten in the evening
461 after the return to camp. For a couple of hours during the
512 heat of the day the natives rest. But they are rarely idle;
even during these halts the men may often be seen squatting
before little fires, making or repairing spears or other
weapons. The women also take advantage of such respites
to work at the string or mesh baskets which they carry rolled
up in a half finished state, just as a white woman may take
up knitting or other handiwork in moments of leisure.

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[777] [15] Failure to do this would bring "bad luck", a ritual visitation,
upon the hunter or on the people. The *tjärnbin*, the name given to
the fat and also to certain of the feathers of the mammals and birds
which have been mentioned, is believed to carry, in concentrated
form, the *marr* or "spiritual power" of the animals. To waste this
[753] *tjärnbin* is to risk a ritual visitation, and if it is held for very long
there is a too great concentration of *marr* so that the people will
[751] become sick. To dispel this *marr*, to avert the danger of sickness
from it, a ceremony called *kunabibbi* must be held in which the fat
and the feathers which are called *tjärnbin* are used and the danger
[777] is averted. It may be noted also that failure to cook game which has
been killed, such as the flesh of one of the kangaroos, will bring
"bad luck" and impair the *tjämbait*, the prowess or "good luck" of
the hunter.

182 a man's or woman's own horde with whom he or she comes
431 into daily contact. They extend also to members of
461 other hordes and are emphasised strongly on occasions
602 when people from distant groups to whom the kinship
[574] organisation is extended, come as visitors. For a young man, such obligations are intense, and to discharge them he is obliged to keep up an almost continuous stream of presents, which entails constant work.

182 With each successive stage of initiation it is obligatory
431 for him to make gifts to the old men of the clan group into
461
626 which he is being initiated. This may become very irksome
561 and may even reach a stage when no matter how hard he works he is unable completely to discharge all his obligations, so laying himself open to the fear of reprisals, such as
[754] visitation by *ḳälḳa* (sorcerers who kill by the use of magic) or by other agencies. Fear of the use of secret methods of reprisal is a very real one, and provides, for a man, one of the strongest inducements to work, to keep pace with his obligations, and so to give no cause for resentment.

431 In those ceremonies such as the *ḳunabibbi* and *ŋulmarḳ*
561
796 which transcend clan and tribal boundaries, and are not
614 restricted to, or regarded as the proprietary right of, a
778 small group such as a clan, but are practised widely throughout the territory, these obligations are less onerous. In others, of the type called *märdai'in*, the initiation ceremonies carried out by each clan or group of clans sharing the same totems, at which its sacred totems are revealed, the burden of the gifts or payments is a heavy one. The internal solidarity of these small groups is intense, and their *märdai'in* or *räŋga*—the secret name for the objects which represent the *mälli*, the "shade" or "spirit" of the totemic ancestors themselves—are jealously guarded. These *räŋga* are very sacred and are regarded as dangerous to the

uninitiated because they are endowed with a force called 431 561
marr (*mana*)[18], and large presentations of food and *gerri* are 614
obligatory to all those to whom these *räŋga* have been 778 796
revealed and who thus share in the solidarity of the group.

Such obligations recur at every stage in each initiation, and following upon each ceremony a man must make a big ceremonial presentation of objects of value, *gerri*, such as fine spears, belts of human hair and especially gifts of the type that are appropriate to the geographical quarter (*kumur*, page 67), within the ceremonial exchange cycle in which his clan territory lies.

If a man comes from a group some distance away, and 431
the occasion is an important one, a dugout canoe (*lippa* 554
lippa) may be presented. This is a big gift and highly [435]
valued. It is important to realise that there is no attempt
to assess the value of these things but rather to create a
feeling of goodwill, to leave behind a good impression,
which a man knows will enhance his prestige and react
in his favour in future transactions. He knows also that he
builds up goodwill by a reputation for generosity and that
this in turn may mean that he will be selected as the [796]
recipient of the *wärna*, the armlets of opossum fur string [777]
or *lindiritj* (Lorikeet's feathers) and other paraphernalia

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[18] *Marr* is a kind of spiritual force or "power" very like the Polynesian concept of *mana*, which underlies social and ceremonial life. It occurs in all sacred objects and is the "force" or "power" which makes them dangerous to the uninitiated or profane and a source of strength and "power" to the fully initiated members of the clan or other organisation. *Marr* is not strength or power, danger or sacredness, alone, although it may be each and any of these things. It is the power which makes a *räŋga*, a totemic object, sacred, which makes a dead body dangerous, and which brings good or bad "luck" in hunting. *Marr* is the force which makes a man *tjämbait*, *i.e.* successful or "lucky" in the pursuit of game.

first phrase means "return from hands", i.e. from handling 431
the bones, the second "return from mouth". Payments in 764
each case are made to the other near relatives. This is a 182
ritual act and may be interpreted as a token "payment" or gesture in formal expiation of an infringement of the solidarity (the *marr*) of a group, members of which are bound together by the sharing of a special bond.

In the case of the ceremonial revelation of the jealously- 182
guarded sacred totemic objects of the clans, with their 431
intense solidarity, it was pointed out that the reciprocal 796
gifts required are substantial and exacting, and I have 778
shown that a considerable amount of organisation is required to enable a man to discharge these obligations.

But it must be remembered that there is also another side to these transactions to which reference has already been
made, and that a man not only gains greatly in prestige [554]
and social status, and increases the scope of the ceremonial exchange cycle in which every individual of standing plays a part, but above all, the *marr* or "spiritual power" from the successful conduct of these reacts directly upon all his other
activities. It assists him in hunting and brings him "good [777]
luck" (*tjämbait*) and as has been stated, it adds to his prestige, his social status.

A graphic illustration of the belief in the spiritual power 777
which reposes in the sacred *räŋga*, occurred while I was 778
living with these people. Immediately after the revelation 796
of the *räŋga*, a ceremony associated with the sun totem of a clan called Maräŋo, a young man went out turtle hunting in his canoe, and returned with four turtles. The old men credited the success of the expedition to "good luck" (*tjämbait*) and claimed that the "body", really the "skin" (*kälŋa*) of the young man was still covered with

777 the fine powdery dust (*ḳänno*),[20] of the ceremonial ground,
778 and declared that the turtles were therefore "*yarḳomirri*"
[796] (lit. "bearing a name", i.e. sacred). A rite was performed to
remove the tabu, before the flesh could be eaten by the
[431] uninitiated. Even then those people, other than members
of the totemic group, who ate the flesh, were called upon
to make a payment of the type previously described, called
tadoit, in this case to the fully initiated members.

182 Reference has been made to the obligation to hunt which
[461] a man incurs in order to provide animal food for the
431 women upon whom he must depend for the large quan-
[561] tities of food which he requires to meet the periodic
[796] ceremonial presentations which mark almost every stage
606 of initiation as well as the termination of each critical stage
604 in his life. This obligation is especially stressed in his
relationship with his *muḳul rumaro*[21] (potential mother-

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[20] *Känno* is really ash, fine, white, powdery wood ash. This man was said to be "*kälŋa ḳännomirri*", "skin with ashes", because the white dust of the ceremonial ground was still on his body and carried its *marr*.

[601] [21] As this paper may be read by many economists who may not have anthropological training, some reference to the kinship system of the aborigines may be of assistance. Under the system which is called "classificatory", the terms of relationship allied to the family and to near kin are extended to a number of people with whom no actual genetic relationship can be traced but who are grouped or classified with own kin. A man applies the term "father" not only to his own father but to all the people his father calls "brother" and this system is extended indefinitely. These terms expressing relationship are used instead of personal names, as terms of address. This system has the effect of reducing greatly the number of actual terms in use. But kinship terms are not mere names, for each carries with it a set pattern of behaviour. In Arnhem Land a man applies the term *muḳul rumaro* (mother-in-law) to the daughter of his mother's mother's brother. He knows that he may look to this woman to provide him with a wife or wives and the pattern of behaviour

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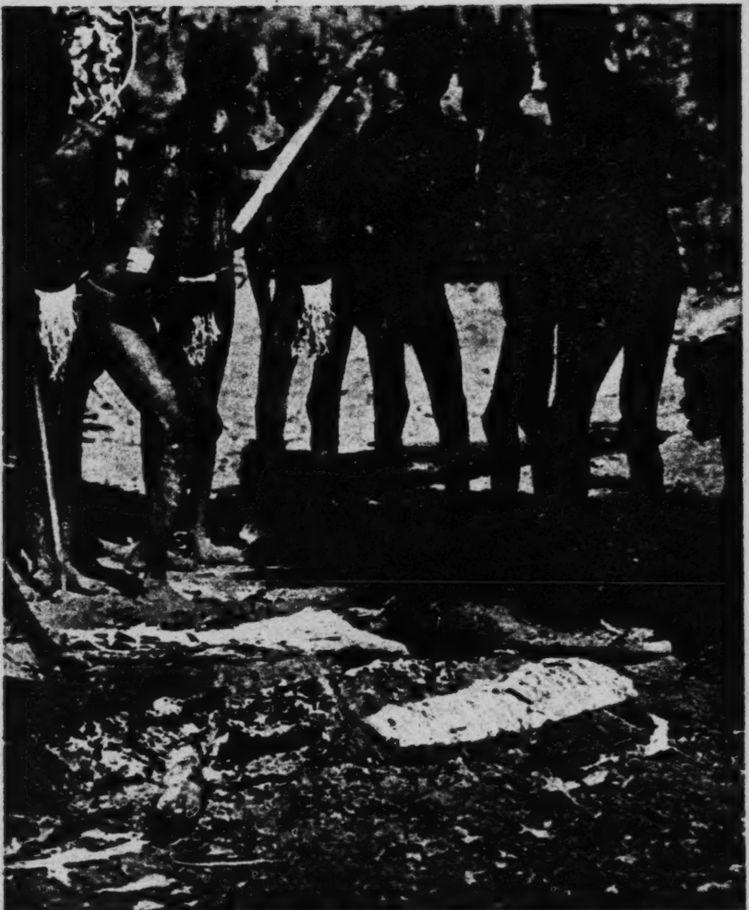

Plate 3. Ceremonial dedication of *ŋātu* (wrapped in tea tree bark), by the Dālkārramirri who recites over it the "big" or sacred names of the appropriate totem and so converts it into sacramental food.

[Facing p.43]

3.

CONCEPTION OF WEALTH, THE GIVING OF PRESENTS AND THE IDEA OF "PAYMENT"

435 The ideas of *wealth* and *value* in a strictly material eco-
436 nomic sense are difficult to define in Arnhem Land. There is nothing approaching "money" or its equivalent, no currency that can be used as a measure or standard of value or medium of exchange, no means of accumulating wealth in condensed form. The term *gerri* is applied to all objects of value, to material possessions.

435 The first thing that must be understood clearly is that
778 for the Arnhemlander all material objects are divided sharply into two categories, those which are *märdai'inboi* or *yarkomirri* (sacred), and those which are *wäkkinŋu*[22] (profane). Objects of the first class, called *märdai'inboi*, comprise all things entitled to be termed *yarkomirri*, which means that they are sacred by reason of dedication

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[22] *Märdai'in* is the ordinary or "outside" name for the clan totem, of which the sacred or *dürrpül* (hidden, secret) name is *rüŋga*. *Märdai'inboi* (of, or from, *märdai'in*) signifies that the object to which it is applied is sacred or tabu, that it possesses the quality of "power" or sacredness by virtue of its association with the *märdai'in* and hence it is *yarkomirri* and itself bears a name, *i.e.* the name of the clan totem to which it is dedicated. This at once restricts its use to members of a special cult, in this case to the fully-initiated members of the clan.

to, or association with, a totemic ancestor or a clan totem. 435

In the second category fall all things ordinary, non-sacred, 778 called *wäkkinŋu*, which in its literal translation means rubbishy, uncouth, outlandish, but is used also to denote merely the category of the non-sacred or "profane" in contrast with *yarkomirri*.

The first category, which comprises objects called *mürdai'inboi* 778 or *yarkomirri*, includes such things as the fine ceremonial [431] armlets made from material which has been removed from the actual totem after the *ŋarra* ceremony, and sent as gifts to friends in other clans. In addition, it includes all weapons and implements, such as canoe-paddles, certain spears, baskets of special type, and smoking pipes which carry the *mintji*, the special totemic patterns of the clan, to one of the totems of which they have been dedicated. This 778 dedication may take the form merely of the giving of the [552] sacred name, after which the object becomes *yarkomirri*, 784 431 or it may constitute a more elaborate ceremony in which the *dälkärramirri*—the "caller of big names"—in his capacity of high priest, calls ceremonially over the object, the sacred *därrpül* (hidden) names of the appropriate totem, thereby consecrating it. Thenceforth it becomes sacred. It is "*yarkomirri*". If it is a spear, game killed with it becomes *duyu* (tabu), if a canoe paddle, all food taken from the canoe propelled by the paddle is also tabu. Its chief attribute is that it possesses *marr*, spiritual power derived from the totem or totemic ancestor whose name it bears. Its use is prohibited to all but fully initiated men of the particular clan (or associated group of clans) from which it came, and in the case of the special, sacred *mintji* or painted designs, may not even be looked upon by profane eyes. To 431 possess these objects carries prestige, and their *marr* imparts [554] power and strength as well as *tjämbait*—hunting prowess, 777 778

431 "good luck" in hunting. They make the hunter *mel kärku-*
[777] *luk,* far seeing, (lit. eye-clear). Such objects are given regu-
778 larly to friends and to members of other clans, particularly
[604] to people who stand in the relationship of *wäkku* (son,
woman speaking: sister's son, man speaking) but although
they carry the obligation to make heavy ceremonial presentations in return, any idea of straight-out exchange—in the sense of economic equivalence, of barter or trade, in connection with things that are *yarkomirri,* is unthinkable.

784 Under certain circumstances, and after a lapse of time, a
778 rite may be performed to remove the tabu from these objects, particularly from canoe paddles, to enable the women and children to be fed on the fish or turtle secured from the canoe, after which they become *wäkkinŋu,* "ordinary" or non-sacred, and lose their *marr,* their "power" (to the initiated) and their "danger" (to the profane).

422 Objects of the *wäkkinŋu* type come under no such restric-
435 tions. In the category of the non-sacred are all a
[771] man's ordinary possessions, his spears and other weapons, canoe, fishing lines, nets, harpoons and all his personal equipment, and for a woman, her yam stick, domestic implements and utensils, her baskets—and in fact all her posses-
[562] sions. For no woman may possess or use any object which is *yarkomirri.*

000 In the foregoing account some of the incentives which lie behind the gathering of food and the manufacture of weapons and material objects have been described. A number of questions now arise. Does a man make all his own weapons and the implements which he requires for his own use, or does he acquire weapons from other people and in turn make them for others? If so, how are these exchanges made and on what terms; how are values assessed, payments made? Is the matter one of straight-out barter, the balancing

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Plate 5. Replica or "*mälli*" of old square-faced bottle which has been elevated to the level of a ceremonial totem of Mildjiŋi clan, emphasising the social and material value of glass. The geometric design in polychrome represents clouds, highly conventionalised, reflected on the wet surface of the bottle washed up on the shore. The small figures around the centre are trepang or *bêche-de-mer* seen through clear water.

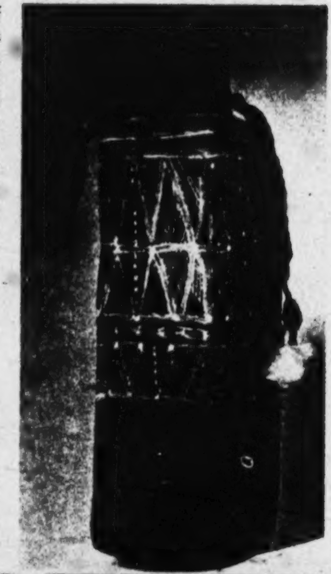

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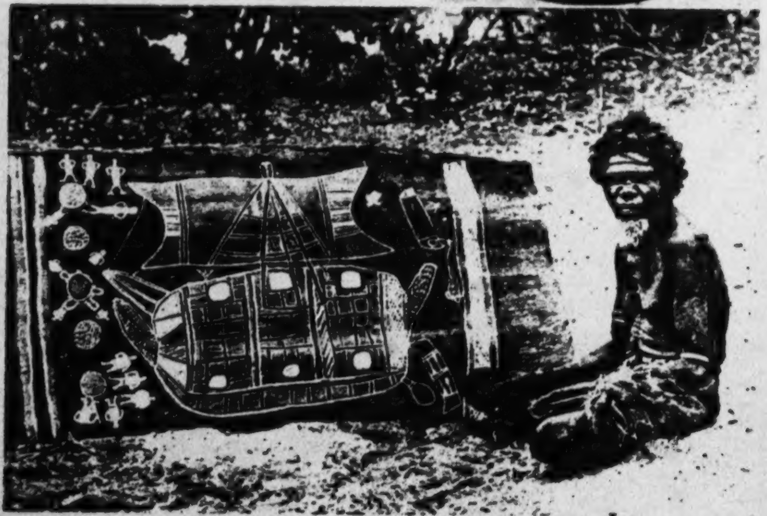
Plate 6. Wongo of Caledon Bay with a drawing in polychrome of a Macassar prau (*mitjäŋ*). These craft made regular visits to the coast of Arnhem Land and introduced *gerri* of a type called, collectively, "*muadäk*", which gave impetus to the ceremonial exchange cycle in this territory.



177 471 hooks, beautifully carved, and light bamboo shafts), all of which are foreign to the culture of East Arnhem Land but are very characteristic of the regions to the west and south-west.

In answer to my questions as to the origin of these objects, I received at first only the laconic reply "*warnba*", or "*warnbaŋor*",[24] west or from the west, lit. west-from, and when I pressed the enquiry further, my informants added "*birr-barlai!*", far away from, a remote place. *Birr* is used to signify very great or very remote, in time or space, e.g. *pämmän birr*—a very long time ago, in the dim past.

The boomerang does not really belong to the Arnhem Land culture, although fine specimens are seen there not [431] infrequently. These are not manufactured locally and almost always show the character of the territory far to the south and south-west, from which they came. Their [534] value in this territory is no longer as weapons for fighting or hunting, but for ceremonial purposes—as "sing sticks" or clappers for beating time—in place of the short heavy ironwood sticks called *birlma* used to beat time for *männikai* ("sings" or chants) which are the accompani- [435] ment of each ritual and ceremonial act. Such *gerri* which 177 bear the halo and glamour of the celebrated exchange cycle, 411 are imbued with *marr*, with *virtu* or "value" apart 431 from their practical uses, and accordingly, some of them are used as objects of material culture and become ceremonial objects and may acquire a symbolic significance.[25] At first my enquiries elicited only the fact that these items

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[24] -ŋor', -ŋora, suffix expressing "motion from".

415 [25] A recent example is seen in the case of the boomerang, to 435 which reference has been made above, but other examples are not 778 lacking. One of these is *botulo*, recognizable as the replica (*mälli* lit. "shade") of an old square faced bottle carved from a block of

"from *warnba*" (the people of the west) entered the area 177
principally from the south-west, by way of the Raimbaräŋa 411
tribe, members of which have long been in the habit of 431
travelling down to outlying cattle stations and even to the overland stock route, and that this food then came east.

Again, the most characteristic type of spear in use 411
throughout Arnhem Land, including the northern shore- 431
line, is *ŋämbi*, a hunting and fighting spear with a detachable flint head, (see frontispiece), *ŋämbi lirra*, (*lirra*, lit. tooth), mounted with hard beeswax and not with resin.
There are only two quarries from which flint spear [135]
heads are derived, but the best, the ones properly called [316]
ŋämbi, come from the quarry at *ŋillipidji*, in the hills near the Walker River in the hinterland of Blue Mud Bay. From this one quarry, of almost legendary renown, come most of the flint spear heads of Eastern Arnhem Land. These *ŋämbi lirra* are generally passed from hand to hand encased in a neat sheath of *Melaleuca* bark (*bärukälla*) called *djalk*—a name applied only to the sheath of this one type of spear and giving its name to *kumur djalk*, the quarter (*kumur*) from which these spear heads enter and of which they are the most characteristic feature. Great bundles of these fine spear heads pass from hand to hand throughout Eastern Arnhem Land, and even farther away to the south, beyond the Roper River, as well as to the west across the Liverpool. The second quarry, mentioned above, is located in the

ironwood and which has now become elevated to the level of a [778]
clan totem. In bygone days glass bottles which were occasionally 435
washed up on the beaches possessed special social value as material 415
for scraps and cutting implements. Similarly the wooden Malay anchor, with a single fluke, which was used by early visitors who came to Arnhem Land from the Celebes, has acquired a symbolic significance which is quite distinct from its original material value as the anchor (*luku*, lit. the foot) of a prau.

FROM THE SOCIAL STANDPOINT THE CONSTANT
flow of *muadäk* from the Macassar visitors enabled a man 182
of this area to discharge his obligations to those from whom 431
he had received *gerri*, and to maintain and to build up his 431
prestige. From the economic point of view it had the effect [554]
of stimulating the circulation of *gerri*, of maintaining a balanced exchange of goods, under cover of what, to the natives, is the vastly more important social and ceremonial relationship.

The orientation of the ceremonial exchange system as it 177
still operates, with the emphasis on the "approved" or tra- 182
ditional *gerri* in each *kumur*, leaves no doubt as to the im- 431
petus which the coming of the Indonesians gave to the culture of this area. The people of the coast, who in former times came into direct contact with the Macassar visitors—and in more recent times, with trepang fishermen and casual seafarers—and who have provided the iron, nails, and bottles (for glass scrapers, etc.) for their exchange partners, are named from the special *gerri*, known collectively as *muadäk*, which they send as reciprocal gifts to their partners in the south.

It is not proposed to deal at length with the ceremonial aspect of this infiltration, and a single reference will suffice to show the effect on ceremonial life, which gives weight to the data which has been recorded, and of the value placed upon the *gerri* which were brought by the Macassar seafarers, as well as the effect of this on economic and social life.

The Mildjiŋi clan of the Glyde River has not only come 177
strongly under the influence of these Indonesian people, 431
but among other traits, has adopted a square-faced bottle, 532
called *butulo*, and has elevated it to the level of a clan totem. 778
Today the *mälli*, the representation, "the shade", the nonmaterial representation or effigy of this bottle, is carved laboriously from solid ironwood, and is painted with a

177 431 532 778 sacred totemic design called *tärrupoŋon*—comprising clouds in highly conventionalised form—which the people say were reflected on the wet surface of the old square-faced bottles when they were found, wet and glistening, cast up by the sea. So that for Mildjiŋi, the bottle, which is regarded as part of the heritage from the Macassar visitors, had a double interest. It ranked among *ḳumur muadäḳ gerri* for ceremonial exchange and as an ordinary "*wäḳḳinŋu*" (non-sacred) manifestation of the *butulo*, which mythology tells them was brought, in ancestral times, by the Munäŋa, the Macassar seafarers, and which therefore gives the people a charter for the adoption by Mildjiŋi clan of *butulo* as a ceremonial totem.

114 177 431 Here is proof, not only of the recognition of the social value of bottles, which in former times were valued greatly as material for scrapers, but also a refutation of Warner's statement as to the conservatism of Arnhem Land culture and what he has termed the "strong resistance of the Murngin culture to outside influence". The example quoted is only one instance of an influence which has been widespread in Arnhem Land culture.

To suggest that it is unlikely that many of the iron axes which were brought by the Malays would reach the interior people, is to underestimate the dynamic effect of the impact of this virile culture on the people of Arnhem Land. In 1935 I made a long patrol on foot across Arnhem Land, and I remember well seeing, on the wall of a rock shelter, far inland, the drawing of an iron axe of the special type called *luŋa linya*, brought in former times by the Macassar people. At the time I felt some surprise, but this feeling disappeared with the subsequent discovery and understanding of the operation of the ceremonial exchange system

623 628 clearly seen that those not represented at the conference were the real instigators of the war and that their actions were without tribal sanction.

[202] One old man then suggested sending a messenger with a message stick to the bushmen, who were not represented, to tell them that there would be a great makarata or peace-making ceremony (pages 174-176). Someone replied that this was foolishness for makaratas had been tried and they had failed because the enemies violated the rules. Instead of bringing peace the makaratas had only brought more trouble and greater conflict. Discussion of this point finally brought victory to the one who opposed the makaratas because the antagonism of the coastal people against the inland clans was still very strong and they wanted vengeance as well as peace.

What, then, could be done to stop the fighting? The situation was desperate; drastic efforts must be made. One of the older men said, "Let us stop all war. This killing of our young men is no good. It is better that we have ceremonies all the time and never have war. Let us have a gaingar."

Everyone agreed he was right. The speaker continued, "We will have a spear fight to end all spear fights."

A gaingar is the most deadly form of Murngin warfare. Later I learned that 17 men had been killed in one gaingar. In proportion to the population this meant a higher mortality rate than in all of the battles of World War I. This old man was proposing that today's young men be sacrificed so that the young men of tomorrow could be saved.

I was asked what I thought of the idea. I did not respond for it was too much. I sat there, among a council of the wisest men of a Stone Age culture. In one sense several millenniums separated their civilization from mine. Yet I had been a soldier in a war in which our leaders and those of our allies had said, "This is a war to end all wars," and had sent millions of young men to die with this rallying cry.

The discussion continued. Most of the group were enthusiastically in favor of the gaingar. The minority, Mahkarolla among them, grudgingly agreed.

When the meeting disbanded Mahkarolla and I walked back to my camp. "When I was a boy I saw a spear fight to end all spear fights," he said. "Many men were killed. It was no good. We must not have it. My people did not stop fighting. As you see, we are fighting today just as we did before. Spear fights do not end spear fights."

159 502 [E121 184 778] One day Mahkarolla and I started on an expedition with two canoeloads of Murngin men, I to map clan territories, he to visit the sacred pools where his totems lived. As we sailed in the dugout around the rocky cliffs of Point Napier, across the channel from the English Company Islands, we

755 the spot selected. After a good deal of massaging, which no doubt affords some relief, he applies his mouth to the spot and sucks vigorously. Next he takes a mouthful of water from a vessel placed in readiness, blows some of the water on to the affected part, and then convincingly ejects from his mouth some foreign substance which has been injected into the man by the *mali* (grosser spirit) of some *morkwoi* (dead person).[8] I have seen such things as small stones, pieces of charcoal, bones of animals, and bits of wood thus extracted. This foreign body is shown to the patient who, nothing doubting, immediately feels relieved and cheerfully pays the " doctor " his fee.

Some years ago our little boy was suffering from a distressingly severe attack of inflamed eyes, and a kindly old *marrngit*, through a fellow-tribesman, requested that he might be allowed to operate on him. Conscious of his kindly thought, and knowing he could do no injury to the little chap, Mrs. Webb and I consented. He thereupon came up to our house, and after carefully massaging the child's head for a while, clapped his huge bearded mouth to his temple, sucked hard for a moment or two, then turned round and ejected a mouthful of blood. The child was at least no worse after the operation. The *marrngit's* explanation of the affliction was that a
[753] donkey which constitutes one of our possessions, had come up, hung his head over the fence, and stared at the child playing inside the yard. The little chap had naturally looked at the donkey, whose evil gaze had done the damage.

The " virtue " or healing magic believed to be contained in the
[778] water of the ceremonial or totemic *mangotfi* (pool or well) of the horde is made available by a ceremony known as *wontjurr*. In this district the ceremonial totemic centre is always some pool, well, or spring of water. In the ceremony of *wontjurr* a representation of this *mangotfi* is made by scooping out a circular hollow in the sand. In this hollow the patient is placed, while all round sit his fellow-tribesmen and friendly associates. A certain chant, differing
[534] for each horde, is then sung over and over again to the accompaniment of *bilma* (clack-sticks) and *yirahi* (drone-pipe), and as it is being sung

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[8] These two terms are often used as being practically synonymous, and the conception behind them is practically equivalent to the old idea of ghost.

The eight subsections, with their totems, are as follows: 621

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Subsections.		Totems.
Male	Female	
(Yiritcha)		
Ngarit	Ngaritjan	*kurrtʃumbul ŋorowarau*[a] (slender-limbed kangaroo).
Bulain	Bulaindjan	*kurrtʃumbul borumŋor* (stout-limbed kangaroo).
Kaijark	Koitjan	*karrkain* (fork-tailed kite). *kurritʃorrk* (large black lizard). *jiriwi-jiriwi* (wagtail).
Bangardi	Bangaritjan	*urrpan* (emu).
(Dua)		
Buralang	Kalian	*werrti* (agile wallaby). *dʒandil* (smaller wallaby).
Balang	Bilindjan	*damala* (white-breasted sea-eagle).
Kamarung	Kumandjan	*karmaruŋ* (wedge-tailed eagle).
Warmut	Warmutjan	*warmut* (black-breasted buzzard). *dulaku* (black-nosed kangaroo).

The moieties are determined by patrilineal descent, but the [611] subsections by matrilineal descent.

The regular system of marriage between the subsections, with 582 the subsections of the offspring, is as follows:— 616

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Yiritcha man.	Dua woman.	Yiritcha children.	
		Male.	Female.
Ngarit	Bilindjan	Bangardi	Bangaritjan
	Kalian	Kaijark	Koitjan
Bulain	Kalian	Kaijark	Koitjan
	Bilindjan	Bangardi	Bangaritjan
Kaijark	Warmutjan	Ngarit	Ngaritjan
	Kumandjan	Bulain	Bulaindjan
Bangardi	Kumandjan	Bulain	Bulaindjan
	Warmutjan	Ngarit	Ngaritdjan

Dua man.	Yiritcha woman.	Dua children.	
		Male.	Female.
Buralang	Bulaindjan	Warmut	Warmutjan
	Ngaritjan	Karmarung	Kumandjan
Balang	Ngaritjan	Karmarung	Kumandjan
	Bulaindjan	Warmut	Warmutjan
Karmarung	Bangaritjan	Buralang	Kalian
	Koitjan	Balang	Bilindjan
Warmut	Koitjan	Balang	Bilindjan
	Bangaritjan	Buralang	Kalian

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[a] Rolled *r* is indicated by *rr*.

582 616 It will be seen from the above that though eight subsections are recognized, these operate in four pairs, so reducing the organization in this respect to a four-section system. It should be noticed, however, that normally a man marries a woman of the first-named subsection in the above, *i.e.*, a Ngarit man regularly marries a Bilindjan woman, but under certain circumstances may marry a Kalian woman. A Buralang man regularly marries a Bulaindjan woman, but may marry a Ngaritjan woman, and so on.

778 The chief ceremonial object is called ***muraian***, and each horde possesses a number. These are, in the vast majority of cases, representations of (*a*) utensils, such as digging sticks (*bartʃu*), dilly-bags (*batti*), clubs (*balata*), *etc.*, supposed to have been used by mythological ancestors; (*b*) natural species associated in legend with these ancestors; (*c*) these mythological ancestors themselves or certain of their physical organs. These *muraian* would, I suppose, be termed ceremonial totems, though it seems an abuse of the term so to apply it. *Muraian* is the common " outside " name for these objects, while the ceremonial or " inside " name is *raŋga*. *Muraian* is, on rare occasions, used to indicate anything sacred or tabu, but correctly the term applies only to these particular objects, the general term for sacred being *yarin*. Thus the *muraian* or *raŋga* is *yarin*.

796 621 778 The ceremonies associated with these *raŋga* are known as *nara*,[3] but while there is found an ill-defined system of local totem centres the *nara* ceremonies are performed at any suitable place, quite frequently in the territory of another horde many miles from the totem centre to which it belongs. Not infrequently both Yiritcha and Dua hordes will unite for a *nara* ceremony, *raŋga* of both moieties being used.

778 621 614 It is upon these *raŋga* that the only real cohesion between the various hordes is based. Certain hordes of the same moiety, though as widely separated as Elcho Island on the north coast and Blue Mud Bay on the Gulf of Carpentaria, possess the same *raŋga*, and these are regarded as belonging to the same *mala*. I leave it to be

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[3] It should be noted that the *nara* ceremonies are in no sense increase rites, which are unknown in this region.

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determined whether the term tribe, sub-tribe, or some other should be applied to these *mala*. 778 621

The horde is usually referred to by the name of the dialect spoken by the members. The name of the *mala* is much less frequently used. 614 621

Below is a list, as complete as present information allows, of the hordes in this area, and the *mala* into which they are grouped. I have used a letter to indicate the *mala*, and the same letter with an accompanying figure to indicate the hordes included in the *mala*. The letter and figure associated are set down on the accompanying chart to indicate the location of the various hordes.

(A) Kalvanuk *mala* (Dua).
A.1. Liakalauomirr.
A.2. Mundalpi.
A.3. Barrarrngor.

(B) Biringal *mala* (Yiritcha).
B.1. Ritarrngor.
B.2. Malarbarrtcharai.
B.3. Buranadjini.
B.4. Kulungngor.
B.5. Mararrpa.

(C) Ding-ding *mala* (Dua).
C.1. Liakauarmirr.
C.2. Guyula.
C.3. Ngaladarr.
C.4. Mun-nerrngor.
C.5. Djarrwarrk.
C.6. Lulmarango.

(D) Munjakai *mala* (Yiritcha).
D.1. Won-guri.
D.2. Kwiyamil.
D.3. Worlkara.
D.4. Wolamangu.
D.5. Giki.
D.6. Kwiyamil.

(E) Berrkali *mala* (Yiritcha).
E.1. Kopapingo.
E.2. Daiorrorr.
E.3. Kopapingo.
E.4. Mukarrganalmiri.
E.5. Yitua.
E.6. Maratanggimiri.
E.7. Dalwongor.

(F) Jiring *mala* (Dua).
F.1. Djumbarpingo.
F.2. Durili.
F.3. Djarn.
F.4. Barlamomo.
F.5. Darmaramiri.

(G) Murngin *mala* (Yiritcha).
G.1. Warumari.
G.2. Korlpa.
G.3. Pural-pural.
G.4. Kumait.
G.5. Lamumiri.
G.6. Burata.

(H) Kauorr *mala* (Dua).
H.1. Karlpu.
H.2. Woralul.
H.3. Reraitchingu.

(I) Murungun *mala* (Dua).
I.1. Yarrnangu.
I.2. Yarrnangu.
I.3. Yarrnangu.
I.4. Kumalungga.
I.5. Malara.

(J) Wurambirrpirr *mala* (Yiritcha).
J.1. Balmaui.
J.2. Obulkara.
J.3. Kopapingo.

(K) Kukauurrta *mala* (Yiritcha).
K.1. Gunalbingo.

(L) Murangarrpiara *mala* (Dua).
L.1. Djinba.

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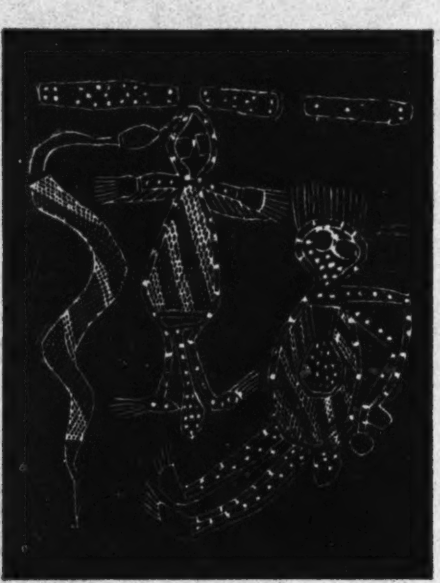
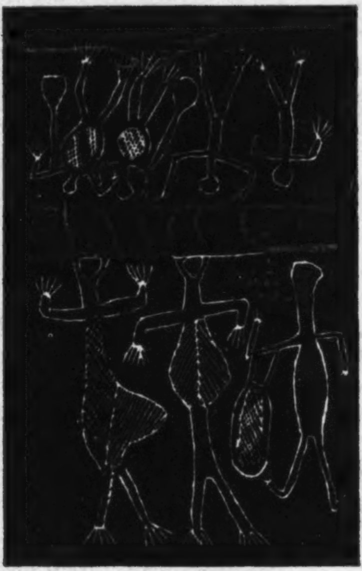


(a) Marrngit of Mun'nyeri'nyir of Tjamparpoingo clan. The three flat objects at the top are stones, with holes represented by spots. The winged male marrngit *is Mallagurrpallamirr, the other his wife (and sister) Barrambit. They come from Guruwanna on the mainland of Arnhem Land behind Howard Island. Left, the snake Bandango.*



(b) The six marrngit *of Wilindjango of Mildjingi clan, Lower Glyde River, and the 'shade'* (malli) *of the* marrngitmirri *himself, lower right. Next to him are Nari, male, and Martung'dung, the female; the bulge is the womb in which she bore the four junior* marrngit *above.*

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● 778
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(c) Wilindjango, whose marrngit *are shown in (b) above. This man was also a renowned rainmaker of his clan. The basket-like structure on his forehead is* ngarak *(lit. flesh), dried human flesh or* mango *(blood) which are used in the practice of magic and ritual cannibalism. The two small wooden pegs projecting from the basket are* yel *and are made from ironwood* (Erythrophlœum laboucherii). *They are part of the stock in-trade of the* marrngit.

(d) Sorcerer, called ragalk *or* kalk', *Burara Tribe, Cape Stewart district, north central Arnhem Land, with* kandjurma, *stiletto-like objects sharpened to a fine point and made from ironwood called* maipin. *The* ragalk *are said to insert these* kandjurma *into the hearts of their victims by way of the neck, thence down the dorsal aorta. In this way they claim the* ragalk *draws out the blood of his victim. In Australia these* kandjurma *are popularly known as 'pointing bones.'*

'MARRNGIT,' 'MARRNGITMIRRI' AND 'KALKA'

Photographs (c, d): D. F. Thomson

[Facing p. 97]

754
[224 on the eyes, cheeks and arm of a hunter to make him alert
789] and far-seeing—*mel karrkuluk*—and so to aid him in
sighting and approaching game that is difficult to kill,
[554] success with which brings prestige to a hunter. The blood
drawn by a *ragalk* from his victim, or the flesh taken from
● [778] the body of a man whose death has been brought about by
a sorcerer, has special potency in magic. It is regarded as
dangerous, *duya*—tabu in a ritual sense by virtue of its
marr—marr dal (*marr*, spiritual power, *dal*, strong). It must
therefore be eaten only with due observance of ritual precautions.
In the case of a young man or uninitiated boy,
human flesh, particularly flesh from the victim of a *kalka*,
may be given to him only by an old man who first applies
[789 his own axillary sweat to the mouth, face and throat of
784] the novice so that he will not become sick, and thus ensures
that he receives the benefit of the *marr* without the danger
that he would otherwise incur. On no account may a boy
or a young man touch this flesh or blood with his own
hands.

774 Meanwhile the victim of the *kalka* lies unconscious and
754 is declared by the natives to be dead. They say that his
malli—his ghost—remains with the body, but that his
birimbir departs. The *birimbir* is very near to our idea of
the soul. It resides originally with the *malli ranga*, the
spirit or spirit-manifestation of the totem which remains
always in the *wangarr kapu manotji*, the totemic well or
water hole where it swam until it entered the mother's
body at conception. When the *birimbir* leaves the body of
the victim of the *kalka*, my informants said that it returned
to the *kapu manotji*. And they added: 'All same he
die.' It is as if the man has died. For when a man dies his
birimbir returns as described above, to the *kapu manotji* from
which it came and swims there until it is again reincarnated.

754 The *kalka* now proceeds to restore his victim to life.
278 He takes a white stone from his dilly bag. First he rubs on
the body the mucilage of an orchid called *djalkurk, Dendro-*
824 *bium dicuphum*, and then warms the stone, which he places
on the sore—*tji'tji*—or on the victim's chest. He warms
the stone again and now places it on the *maiyang* (throat)
and chest. Then he draws the skin back into place, heats
the stone again and places it on his victim's cheeks, supplementing
the stone with the blade of his *mangal*—spear-thrower.
My informants said that the penis of the victim
is erect, the tongue hanging out and the bowel prolapsed,
and each of these organs has to be treated and replaced in
position. Sometimes one of the *kalka* will climb a nearby
tree and break down the leafy nest of a green tree ant
(*Œcophylla virescens*)—which exudes a strong, pungent
odour of formic acid and is believed by the natives to
have some therapeutic value. The *kalka* scatters these ants
over the prolapsed intestine, which my informant declared
to be effective in causing it to retract.

754 It was a matter of surprise to me to find a number of men
who were in possession of the *kandjurma*, which are the
stock-in-trade of the *ragalk*, admitted to membership of
the cult, and were even willing to demonstrate to me their
technique in dealing with a victim.

The natives do not pretend that a man subjected to
treatment by *kalka* in the manner described is afterwards

619 they also possess rituals and myths in common, and in many
614 cases, obvious dialects of one language.

Each of these groups is a patrilineal clan, the members
(apart from the wives of the men), being all related in the
male line; a social group consists of a man and his brothers
and sisters, his children, his son's children, his brother's
children and such like. Members of such a clan must never
[582] marry one another, but only members of other clans,
according to the kinship rules. This rule is called local
exogamy. The members of the local clan, together with
[621] their wives who have come to live with them (as is the
[591] custom), are called a horde.

779 The most important feature of the local clan is the link
775 which binds its members to one or more sacred totemic
614 waterholes (or wells) in the clan country. The well was
[778] formed by the cult totemic hero and ancestor of the clan.
In it have sojourned from the great ancestral time the spirits
of all those whose earthly course is run, that is, the souls
of the dead. Also associated with the well are the clan's
totemic emblems and ceremonies. One important function
of the latter is the maintenance of the regular order
[789] of the dry and wet seasons, and the link with the creative
epoch of the totem. Incidentally the souls of the dead may
take up their abode, not only in the well, but also in the
totemic emblems, and are believed to be present at the great
totemic ceremonies. In addition they are called upon to do
their part in some rites, especially in connexion with burial.
[764] For example, in Chapter 14, Mr Chaseling refers to a deceased
child's grandfather chanting a prayer to his own dead
brother (that is, the child's 'tribal' grandfather), to come and
take the child back to Buralkor, the Island of the Dead. But
though a deceased person's spirit goes to this island, it returns
[778] to the totemic well in his clan's country. This may
seem contradictory to us, but just as space and time were no
obstacle to the great ancestresses who came from the island,

so it is with man's spirit. Moreover, according to native 779
psychology, a man has two souls, and according to some 775
beliefs, it is a man's bush or trickster spirit which goes to the 614
Island of the Dead. But however that be, the more im- [774]
portant of these two spirits of the dead does sojourn in the [764]
totemic well, and to make sure that the spirit arrives there, [778]
signs are made by pointing and singing to the grandfather to come for him. As one informant told Dr Warner, who studied the subject intensively, 'if we didn't sing, he might go bad because evil ghosts might catch him and take him out in the jungle country where they live. It is better that his old grandfather and his ancestors come and get him and take him straight to his clan well where his totem came from.'

Religion

Readers of Mr Chaseling's book will be impressed by the 771
important part played by religion in the life of the Aborigines. Mythology and ritual, totemism and beliefs regarding the spirit of man, the Great Creator Spirit who is revealed in the Rainbow Serpent, and the 'mother goddess', are all part of this religious life. The ritual is the prescribed acting of the great myths by fully initiated men; the mythology provides the sanction and pattern for the rites and for present-day behaviour. The emphasis on the Creator Spirit (associated with the sky) and a kind of 'earth-mother' distinguished [171]
Arnhem Land from Central Australian mythology, though interest in the sky-world and a belief that it is the source of life-giving powers (especially through the Rainbow Serpent and the medicine-men), were widespread in Australia. Mr Chaseling's Chapter 17 shows how the natives of his region are fascinated by the sky-world and in their mythology reveal a desire to go to it.

Further details of north-east Arnhem Land myth and 114
ritual are given in W. L. Warner's *A Black Civilization*. He also discusses fully the totemism of the region. A general

752 262 honour; sickness overtakes the offender, or the father may
224 spear him.
[753]

New spears, knives, axes, and canoes are sometimes
●778 pronounced sacred and thereby impregnated by tabu.
784 Custom provides for the use of such articles in inter-tribal
411 presentations, and any responsible man may prepare them
224 and paint his horde's totem on them. Nanyan, a youth of
[431] the Gerrkee horde, spent most of his time at Yirrkala, and
[531] I watched him make a spear and 'declare' it sacred. But the tabu could not be completed till he had killed with it, and when he speared a kangaroo it automatically became tabu to all but the men of his horde. After the meat had been eaten the oldest man present completed the ceremony by painting totemic symbols on it for Nanyan. He prized his spear and used it for a time in hunting; and because it had
[531] been ceremonially 'painted', the tabu was under control, and women and children of his own horde were allowed to
[562] eat meat killed with it, though on no account could the kill be shared with females from other hordes.

Nanyan later presented his spear to a man of the Kumite
[431] horde who had no totemic or marriage link with the Gerrkee. This 'alien' appreciated the courtesy and used the spear freely in the hunt, but only the initiated men could eat the
[562] food, the women and children not being allowed to share in the kill, because their horde had no associations with the spear's totemic centre. Finally the spear was formally returned to Nanyan who put it to normal use in procuring food for himself and family.

784 On patrol I visited a horde camped among the casuarinas
226 near Caledon Bay, and in the evening saw the men return
562 with a canoe loaded with fish. During the unloading I noticed that the women and children deliberately kept away and ignored the splendid haul, and I was told that the canoe

and everything connected with it, including fish, turtle, and 784
other food carried in it, were tabu to women and children. 562
It appeared that two days previously the horde had migrated 226
from the south and had brought a skeleton in the canoe, thereby rendering it tabu to women and children. It was another case of mumbakuta.

Sons and sons-in-law of the deceased person brought the fish ashore and ate them around a totemic well scooped in the sand. The leavings were carefully buried in the 'well' [765]
and the customary fire lit over them. The camp then went to the canoe on the beach, lit a fire on the sand, and taking leafy branches held them in the smoke and switched them [775]
over the canoe to hunt off the ghost of the dead man. Once [783]
the skeleton's influence on the canoe was removed, it was safe to travel in, and food could be eaten from it.

Skeletons are customarily carried in bark parcels and 784
exert far-reaching influences, and 'mali', or ghosts, accom- 775
panying such bones must be placated. In an exchange I 765
made with Yama for his father's bones (which I wanted 778
to send to the Sydney Museum), I bartered several items for the complete skeleton in its bark cylinder with his horde's totemic symbols painted on the outside. Unknown [531]
to me, there were two powerful influences in the bark parcel, one in the bones and the other in the totemic symbols on the bark itself; for such bones laid a tabu on all they touched, just as they would have done if carried in a canoe, and the bark cylinder, by having a totemic sign painted on it, was sacred. Among the items I had exchanged for the skeleton was an axe, so it was agreed that for ceremonial purposes, this should absorb the tabu from the bones and also from the bark cylinder. Thereafter only the nearest relatives could touch it. To remove the skeleton tabu from the axe, Yama cut open a tree containing a bee's nest. Be- [783]
cause of the tabu, only fully initiated men of the horde could [222]
eat it; but ~~after~~ the meal, the axe was painted to make it

784 safe for everyone to use. But the influence of the totem on
775 the cylinder still remained in the axe, and it could therefore
765 be used only by near relatives. To overcome this, Yama cut
●778 a canoe, thereby transferring the totemic influences to it.
[222] The dug-out was 'de-ghosted' in much the same way as if it
[783] had carried the actual bones; fish caught from it were
ceremonially eaten, and it was switched with smoking twigs
to drive off the tabu.

224 'Ghostly' help is freely sought by hunters to assist them
775 in their search for food. It is generally accepted that if the
ghost, or mali, of a dead man is harnessed it will assist in the hunt by rounding up fish, birds, or animals. A ghost dims the eyes of the game so they cannot see clearly, blocks their ears so they cannot hear the hunter, and plays such havoc with their noses that he is unrecognizable.

224 To obtain the assistance of such a ghost, a hunter must
775 carry a 'maiwola' or small piece of bone, hair, skin, or
778 blood from the corpse. Small bones, hair, or other parts of a
765 body, may be had for the asking when a corpse is being
[064] dismembered in any normal burial ceremony, and these
'hunting-charms' are wrapped in bark and hung round the neck. The ghost, or mali, lurks near its skeleton and, as in the instance of a skeleton carried in a canoe, exerts influence over it and all that it touches. But when a hunter carries a piece of the body as a charm, he is able to control the ghost so that it does his bidding, and when he is hunting the ghost follows the charm. If it happens that several men have obtained charms from the same corpse, and in different parts of the country go hunting at the same time, the ghost will serve one and then hurry off to help another. This explains why charms are not always effective, for if a hunter catches nothing, that is because the ghost is otherwise engaged, or is away lurking by the main part of its skeleton,
775 which is wrapped in bark and carried by a tribal mother.

763 Any strange event can be readily explained by attributing

murulkurr' (referring to wives' mothers' brothers), and 601
'nguti walkurr' (wives' mothers' mothers' brothers). In all I
traced over one hundred different relationships, of which
only about one-third had English equivalents. Fortunately
for us, modern society does not recognize the remainder,
for some of them are involved and interminable—such as
'mumulkurr', who may be wives' maternal grandmothers,
or grandmother's brothers' wives, or maternal uncles'
wives' mothers.

There are several groups of loosely knit hordes in Arnhem 619
Land. In the west from Cape Don to the Liverpool River,
thirty hordes are associated in common society, each speaking
similar dialects, but, as a social group, having no intercourse
other than that of a warlike nature with adjacent horde-groups.
Again, immediately east of Cape Stewart, and
extending to Blue Mud Bay, two hundred and fifty miles
away, is the group of thirty-six hordes amongst whom I
spent most of my time. A peculiarity of these large independent
groups is that they are nameless, though occasionally
reference may be made to 'island people' or 'mountain folk'.
Yulengor from the Murungga Island horde are frequently
called 'Murrnggin'. Hordes in the Gulf country call those
in the west 'Meerwaitj', which means 'Where the sun goes
down', and the Meerwaitj vaguely refer to the eastern
Yulengor as 'Wornba' or 'Where the sun gets up'. These
are only vague local references; the social group as a whole
is nameless.

Throughout Arnhem Land many sacred trees, wells, 773
creeks, springs, reefs, and peculiar rocks, were visited by the 778
creative Ancestors, and here they performed important acts
and instructed their children in their lore. Yams and
digging-sticks, used first by the Ancestors, are linked to a [779]
totemic well where the earliest nomads were taught to dig
for food, and at another creek the pandanus palm umbrella
mat, 'Ngunmurra', was first introduced.

YULENGOR

779 Totems in sacred ceremonies are known as 'maraian', and generally denote some utensil used by the Ancestors. Maraian may also be birds, animals, or fish intimately linked with the Ancestors. Parts of the nomad's anatomy, representing that of an Ancestor, and usually their reproductive organs, feature in song and dance. Such caricatures are accepted by the nomads, but I have seen consternation and embarrassment amongst mixed parties of white visitors attending these ceremonies.

779 796 614 621 778 Totemic beliefs link widely separated hordes, who meet for ceremonies connected with the creation myth, for bone-burying and for initiations. Several clans may be co-guardians of the same sacred site, such as the Reratjingo of Port Bradshaw and the Lia-gullomirry from the Woolen River, who are separated by about a hundred and fifty miles, yet both belong to the Dua moiety and have close connexions with a sacred well on the Woolen River where a great mythical snake in Creation days distinguished himself by swallowing two of the Ancestresses. Guardianship of this site has been mainly in the hands of the Woolen River horde, but at rare intervals Reratjingo men from Port Bradshaw make their way to the well and take part in the ceremonies. A sacred maraian, consisting of a painted hollow log, represents the snake, and is the centre of the rite, and at certain stages in the proceedings the leader blows through it to produce dull, booming reverberations which are said to be the voice of the snake. An old man of the visiting Reratjingo returned to Port Bradshaw, painted a
[178] similar maraian, and introduced the ceremony to his horde; now his sons, grandsons, and nephews carry out the ritual of this totem.

778 531 Some designs and myths, painted on maraian in coloured clays, or bound with string and parrot feathers, involve weeks of careful preparation. A shower of rain will efface the paint; moths may consume the string; the horde leader

must memorize the design. Blank spaces on maraian are 778
due to the artist's loss of memory, and they freely admit that 531
they have forgotten some parts of the design.

As well as having a link with the distant Woolen River, 628
the Reratjingo had its own totem centre near Port Bradshaw, 614
and were co-guardians with the Kalpu. But this did not 621
guarantee unity, for the question of guardianship led to 779
quarrels in which several were killed and the Reratjingo 778
withdrawing to Melville Bay forty miles away. But the Kalpu victory was short lived, for in driving off the Reratjingo they so weakened the home-front, that their hereditary enemies, the Juppu of Blue Mud Bay, descended on them with such vindictiveness that the remnant fled to the English Company's Islands eighty miles away, and they have been on the defensive ever since.

Prolonged friendships between hordes does not prevent 628
the sudden cessation of diplomatic relations, and an oc- 578
casional killing. The Gerrkee from Cape Shield had fraternized, hunted, and camped for years with the Juppa. Though they were of opposite moieties, they exchanged secret law, held totemic dances, and seemed inseparable. Yet one night when I was visiting their camp I saw that they were at loggerheads, and soon afterwards they brandished their spears, attacked each other, yelling threats and obscenities. It all started at the end of a successful day's hunting, when everyone had more than enough to eat and a Juppa woman hit her Gerrkee husband with a digging-stick after a trivial disagreement. He retaliated by knocking her down and bumping her head on the ground. Her father heard her screams, and remonstrated with his son-in-law, who then called on his brothers for assistance. In a flash, both clans were in a fracas. Women used their digging-sticks, or lengths of wood from the camp-fires, and darted in amongst the men to deal their blows. Men slashed with yard-long flat spear-throwers. After an hour of bedlam,

MEDICINE-MEN AND MAGIC

Faith-healing depends on an appeal to stars, water-spouts 755
or Ancestors. If a man is wounded or ill he may appeal or 821
'sing' for help to a water-spout, for this is the only tangible
link between the earth and the sky. If the appeal is successful,
the water-spout sends a beam of light to shine on the sick
man, and the light indicates that the water-spout has per-
suaded the man's ancestors to heal him. Ancestors later come [787]
in a dream and promise restoration, whereupon the man
wakes up and says: 'I shall get better.'

An appeal may be made to a falling star, or 'larrpan', which sends a cool mist or fog over the patient to revive him, or if the star shoots through the sky and leaves a red trail it signifies that an Ancestor is on his way to heal the sufferer.

It may happen that a sick man is near his horde's totemic 755
well; if so, he jumps into it and asks the mythical Snake to [778]
heal him. Though he cannot see the spirit of the Serpent, it
comes out of hiding to lick him and restore him. If this
totemic well is a long way off, a symbolical well may be
scooped in the sand so that the sufferer can stand in it
while water or sand is poured over him. His friends sit near
by, singing the mythical story of Creation and calling on the
Serpent for help.

411 flat strip of wood three feet long and two to three inches wide. It is held between the second and third fingers so that the end of the thrower rests in the palm. At the opposite end there is a short hook, or pointed stub of hardwood, bound firmly in place with string and gum. The end of a spear is slightly concave, so that it fits over the hook on the thrower, which is then extended above and behind the shoulder for the throw. A man's thrust is greatly increased by the spear-thrower, and heavy and light spears are thrown with dangerous accuracy for distances of from forty to eighty yards; I have seen them thrown fifty yards and penetrate six inches into a tough palm tree. A nomad and his mangal are inseparable, and if by chance he loses or breaks his spear, or even finds it inconvenient to carry one, he always carries his spear-thrower. If a spear is unexpectedly thrown at him he has a good chance of throwing it back at his enemy if he has his spear-thrower.

531 Men use infinite care in painting and decorating themselves, their weapons, and utensils, and in ceremonial life they will spend weeks in making, painting, and decorating totems. Decorative art is limited by an unchanging back-
● [778] ground of mythology and religion, and sacred designs are
[428] passed from father to son to be meticulously reproduced when preparing youths for initiation, or on corpses, skulls, and burial posts. There is little originality in ceremonial artistry, but nomads are not devoid of artistic tendencies and spend a lot of time in decorating weapons and utensils. A woman patiently weaves a dilly-bag and then sets about mixing coloured clays for its decoration; her aesthetic impulse is gratified, although the bag is not improved thereby. Youths decorate play-spears, and they cannot refrain from smearing designs on their bodies if they find moist clay
532 or soft ochre. Men paint pictures of animals, fish, and birds on sheets of bark for pleasure, and when we took horses and

cattle to Yirrkala it was not long before their likeness too 532
appeared on bark sheets.

I saw little-known caves on the Wessel Islands, in which totemic myths had been painted side by side with Japanese pearlers, Macassar proas, and odd European wanderers. Rock paintings are common in many parts of Australia, except in Arnhem Land where outcrops of rock are so rare that only three lots of rock paintings have been found. Here the primitive artist uses a bark sheet, which in itself indicates some measure of aesthetic impulse, for it is not easily obtained and has no permanence.

The Serpent in sacred myths is spiritually present in the 778
'maraian' or log painted with totemic symbols. For cere- 531
monies, the maraian is kept in a bush shelter deep in the 796
scrub, and initiated men guard it till the moment arrives
for its dramatic elevation. They push their way through the
shelter toward the over-awed initiates, and grovel, shudder,
squirm, and roll over and over with strained and contorted
faces, as if overcome by dread of the long maraian so care-
fully borne across their bodies. Wriggling along in the rear,
the leader of the ceremony blows through the maraian and
produces the low booming sound so feared by women and
children and believed to be the voice of the Serpent.

Designs on maraian are made from coloured clays, 386
string, and feathers. Hundreds of yards of string are wound 531
on some of them, and the effect is enhanced by weaving [778]
into it white birds'-down, red and green parrots' feathers, [237]
or opossum fur. Red ochre-stone from a totem centre on
Elcho Island is traded for hundreds of miles, and is in de- [438]
mand because of a greasy property which makes it adhere to [302]
the skin. Ordinary clay-paints crack and peel, but this
is overcome by crushing orchid stems and smearing the [824]
sticky juice over the body before applying the paint.
Participants in ceremonies decorate themselves with totemic 531
designs, and glue long lines of white birds'-down on their 301

754 food in fire made from a certain shrub; as the heat increases
his throat swells till he dies. The trouble can be cured only
[755] by finding the fire and pouring water on it. If a spear or
spear-thrower is broken and burnt, the owner's hands
become crippled and twisted by rheumatism. A saccule
or bark drinking-cup also provides means for injuring the
one who drank from it, for if a pronged fish-spear is stabbed
into it the victim's throat swells till he dies. Maleirpa the
leper had lost most of his fingers and toes long before
his misfortune was attributed to magic, but someone idly
recalled that, years previously, Bulambi had followed
Maleirpa's footprints along a beach and had aimlessly
dropped the point of his pronged fish-spear into them.
Obviously Maleirpa's toes had dropped off in consequence.
As the victim did not die immediately, Bulambi was not
[683] killed, but when the afflicted one finally succumbs, Bulambi
will need to make restitution to his next-of-kin by the gift
of a canoe, an axe, or spears. Meanwhile Bulambi, the leper,
and his brothers fraternize and hunt happily together.

789 'Nyirrah' is specialized magic connected with the making
787 of wind and rain, the poisoning of food before it is eaten, and
the controlling of a woman's desires so that she can be made
to desert her husband and follow the man of Nyirrah. Such
magic comes to a man in a dream, by instruction from
another Yulengor or by direct bestowal from the Nyirrah
spirit-centre. When the body is asleep human spirits are free
to roam and converse, and then a spirit with Nyirrah powers
[774] may invite another to see him kill a man or make rain. A
[778] more direct method is to go inland to a mythical tree from
which Nyirrah powers are dispensed. Approaching the tree
the man hears the beating of clap-sticks, and their very invisibility
proves that spirits inhabit the tree. If he is brave
enough to go nearer Nyirrah will automatically come upon
him.

BLACK MAGIC

There are no direct methods for stopping a storm, and it 123
is taken for granted that the rain continues as long as the 789
rain-maker wills it. If fine weather is desired it is necessary 821
to intimidate the rain-maker. During protracted stormy weather I developed acute appendicitis, and as the wireless transmitter had been shattered by lightning, we were unable to get medical assistance till five Yulengor, including Mau, volunteered to make a hazardous open-sea trip to the nearest pedal-wireless station one hundred and fifty miles away. Day after day the storms and high seas continued and the canoe was hardly expected to get through. From the time the boys left till the flying doctor arrived, Jirring, who was particularly attached to me, sat by his camp-fire significantly grinding his axe and muttering threats against the misguided rain-maker who had not only manufactured the storms, but now obstinately allowed them to continue.

Another kind of magic belongs to certain localities and 754
it is necessary to perform certain rites at these magic-centres. [778]
An old gnarled tree in the Wessel Islands shelters the spirits [776]
of octopuses, and peculiar rock formations near Cotton Island are also octopus-spirit centres. If a nomad wishes to harm another he visits either site and instructs a spirit-octopus to enter the victim's body, in an invisible form, or to change into a fish which the victim will catch and eat to his destruction. Two men from Arnhem Bay were killed in the course of a long feud, so their mother went to an octopus centre and sent a spirit to spoil her enemies. She told the octopus-spirit to travel into enemy territory and there change into a large shell-back turtle, to float near the shore, and to remain inactive till caught and eaten: 'And when they eat you, you kill them,' she said. About that time the unfortunate enemy chanced to harpoon an outsize turtle near Port Bradshaw, and ate all they could, without paying attention to the poison glands. Within a few hours

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Creation Myths—Out of the Dawn

*773 [771] As with most primitive people, the story of Creation is of the utmost importance to the aboriginal. Everything he says and does, from the songs he sings to the way he catches and cooks his food, is determined by the way it was done by his mythical creators. A striking similarity links aboriginal creation stories with the myths of all primitive peoples, even to the inclusion of a supernatural serpent. One Arnhem Land snake went so far as to eat two of the ancestral agents; today he is the most important living link with the spirit world. His voice is thunder, and lightning flashes from his tongue. [821]

Legends in east Arnhem Land say that these mythical Ancestors came from 'over the sea' and 'beyond the dawn'; hordes in the west believe that their creative agents came from beyond the sunset.

776 *773 Junkgowa, or creative Ancestresses, came from the spirit-world of Buralkor. Wangarr is the Great Spirit of Buralkor, and though vague and indefinite in form and purpose, he long ago expressed himself through semi-human Junkgowa-agents, and continues to reveal himself in any unusual happening, such as an eclipse, an earth tremor, or a cyclone. [821] Junkgowa created important food-producing areas, unusual rock formations, peculiar water-holes and springs, which are links with the spirit-world. • [778]

Stories of creation vary greatly, for in east Arnhem Land the Junkgowa travelled some three hundred miles up and down amongst a group of three dozen hordes, and now each horde jealously preserves a detailed account of what [184]

took place in its own particular territory. Yet the essentials 776
of the story agree to an astonishing extent, considering 773*
that there is no written language and that details must 184
be passed on orally or in ochre-painted pictures. By far
the biggest variation concerns the Junkgowa's sex, for in
the east, where they landed, it is said that they were male
and female, but half-way across the social group it is maintained that they were sisters.

Before leaving the spirit-world the Junkgowa created the 773*
sea so that they could travel in their long-nosed canoe, 533
which was paddled in much the same way as their human
descendants learnt to paddle theirs, and they made light of
their toil by improvising songs. First they sang about their
paddles, and this 'paddle song' is preserved as a chorus in an
important ceremony recording Junkgowa songs and tales of
their deeds. Waves rose for the first time, so they sang about
them, and also about turtle, dugong, sharks, deep sea
fish, and a porpoise that guided them on their way. A seagull that followed the canoe, and at times rested on it, is
also immortalized in song.

But singing alone could not do away with their toil and 773*
fatigue, and the Junkgowa became so hot that they called up 821
the cool south-east monsoon, which rose in the spirit-land,
and has blown steadily for at least five months in every
succeeding year. With the breeze behind them they hoisted
a sail, and after several nights and days they made a landfall.
Near the shore the sea was too rough for safe landing, so the
Junkgowa stopped the wind and thereby introduced the
calm that now follows the south-east monsoon and precedes
the north-west monsoon. Presumably they did not allow for 773*
a treacherous 'ninth' wave that over-turned the canoe, and 778
this incident is authenticated by a long black rock that rose
out of the waves to mark the scene of the accident and to
enshrine the lesser-spirit of the canoe. Yulengor point out
the rock to their sons to this day.

YULENGOR

*773 A goanna was among the many sacred totems in the canoe,
● 778 and he fared better than the rest; he swam ashore and hid
[779] in a lagoon. His lagoon is now an important totem centre,
and the lesser-spirit, or mali, of the goanna guards it. As in
many underground springs, the water occasionally bubbles
up in the lagoon, and this is a sign that the goanna is moving
[562] below. No women are allowed near the totem, and if yams
[784] in the vicinity are eaten the results are fatal. Old men who
remember the Macassars told me that when they attempted
[648] to make their trepang camps on the beach by the lagoon the
Yulengor got rid of them by refusing to allow them to use
the water or to gather firewood.

Restrictions are enforced on firewood in the area, because
the goanna sent his mali into one of the trees growing by the
spring. When the Junkgowa followed the goanna ashore,
they were attracted by the singular beauty of this tree, for as
[825] well as the goanna-mali they saw a small red parrot in the
[531] branches. They declared that thereafter the feathers of this
parrot were to be used in decorating totems of the Dua
moiety. The tree was pronounced sacred; there are now
[824] many of them near the lagoon, and the tabu has been
extended to them all.

*773 Totems, or 'rungga', floated ashore, and the Junkgowa
779 hung them in the tree to dry. But when the pandanus palm
armlets were washed up on the beach, they sprang to life and
grew of their own accord, and the Junkgowa stripped them
[824] of their fronds and wove them into the first aboriginal armlets,
dilly-bags, and nganmaras. These articles are in everyday
use, but because the Junkgowa made them, they are
also totems, and their story is preserved in the songs and
ceremonies of the guardian horde.

Two other sacred centres were visited between Blue Mud
[778] Bay and Cape Arnhem, where the Junkgowa performed
miracles and taught their children totemic secrets and dances.
[796] It is the record of these activities, some of them so trivial as

to include natural body functions, that forms the basis of 773*
the nomads' ceremonial culture and is preserved in narrative-songs. 779
At Port Bradshaw the Junkgowa made dilly-bags, [796]
yam sticks, feather belts, and armlets, and left two lots of
children to guard the totems and multiply into the Kalpu
and Reratjingo hordes. Today these warlike clans regard
the site as their mutual totem centre, though they have [778]
nothing else in common. Ten children were born to the 773*
Junkgowa at Yallangbarra, but as they were sexless a
further miracle was required to change them into normal
beings. To do this the Ancestors carved ten effigies; they
hid half of them in the long grass on the dunes and laid the
remainder in a depression in the sand. Those in the grass
grew beards and turned into males, as did five of the sexless
children; those in the smooth sand remained smooth faced
and exerted a similar influence on the remaining sexless
children, who thereupon became females.

Loaded with totems, the Junkgowa turned westward and 773*
came to a large granite dome by the shores of Arnhem Bay 779
where they left totems and the nuclei of hordes. This rock
is now a totem and preserves the mali of a yam that was first [778]
planted beneath its shelter. Between Arnhem and Buckingham
Bays a goanna was set free, and the art of making sacred
yam sticks and dilly-bags was taught to children born and
abandoned there. Fire also was introduced, and its mali [372]
was embodied in a totem.

Just how the nomad discovered fire remains a mystery, 372
but today his fire-making is a simple though skilful art. Like the first Ancestors, the operator rests a short softwood stick on the ground, and sitting behind it he holds it firmly in place with his foot. In the upper surface of the softwood he bores a shallow hole and makes a small cut to form a channel in one side of it. A pointed hardwood stick is placed in the hole and twirled rapidly backwards and forwards between his palms so that the friction causes the softwood fibre to

372 smoulder. This falls on a handful of dead grass which is held in the wind, or blown on, till it bursts into flame. I have seen the whole operation of fire-making completed in as little as twenty-three seconds, or in scarcely more time than it takes to open a box of matches, select one and strike it.

*773 On their way westward the Junkgowa raised a circular granite dome into which they fused the lesser spirit of the ● [778] sun. Yulengor beat this sun-totem when the country be- [789] comes saturated and impassable in the wet season, and it is said that this causes the water to evaporate.

Away in the west a rising cloud of smoke interested the Junkgowa, and they made their way toward it and came on an old Man sitting by his camp fire. He was startled by the Women; the more so when they spoke to him in his own tongue and asked what he was doing.

His reply was noncommital: 'I sit by myself.'

'Yes, we can see that. Are there no other Men here?'

In a burst of confidence the hermit told them that he was the last of his horde: 'All my brothers are dead. They died from sores leaving white patches on their skin. Whenever they scratched themselves, the skin came off, and then they died.' Daunted neither by his rusticity nor his lugubrious tale, the Women made a wind-break shelter and camped a few yards from his fire. Next night they ventured a little nearer, and on the third night they suggested to him that it would be more sociable if they were all to camp together rather than keep two camp-fires alight. He agreed to the suggestion, and as the dawn was breaking twins were born to each of the Junkgowa. Many children were sent out from this camp to inaugurate new hordes, but first they were trained in arts and crafts, beliefs and magic, and received totems, ceremonial secrets, and Stone Age implements. When the old Man died, the Women experienced again the restless urge to go westward, and they broke camp and

*773 power of the men's ceremonial singing and dancing, and
779 after the manner of women they were compelled to block their ears, to hide their faces and to run from the place. With unholy glee my informants recounted the rout of the Junkgowa Women, and added that they consoled themselves by saying: 'No matter, let the men keep the totems.' And men have guarded them ever since.

*773 Having outstayed their usefulness at Yaure-Yaurngor,
776 the Ancestresses were relieved to hear the beating of distant clap-sticks, and traced them to Elcho Island. They came to the western end of Cadell Strait, and seeing plenty of fish they tried to catch them, but only succeeded in injuring their hands. Until this time their hands were webbed and without fingers, but as they chased the fish and repeatedly struck their hands on the rocks the skin was broken and fingers were formed.

*773 Elcho Island is an important totem-centre in Arnhem
779 Land, where self-created totems were in existence before
•[778] the Junkgowa arrived. One of the peculiarly shaped totem-rocks embodies the mali of the 'shout' in the great Ngara ceremony. Others contain the mali of yam sticks, crabs, and palm mats. As these totems were being evolved they were attacked by swarms of sandflies and forced to retreat along the beach, till finally they wriggled into the sand for protection, and now only small parts of them project above the surface.

The Ancestresses made a long sand-bar totem, that they might cross to the island and endow it with the mali of their
[778] clap-sticks. On a nearby reef they dropped two large rocks to enshrine their own lesser-spirits. Another sun-totem was
[789 821] made on the beach, and like the one near Arnhem Bay it is beaten after heavy rain. In support of the custom, one of my guides remarked: 'Yes, Ngulprei's mother beat it last wet season to make the ground dry so she could go for yams
*773 at the other end of the island.' By the side of the sun-totem

own, but offered an excuse: 'I thought you had your own food, judging by the noise you made.' Kaitjalan was sorely troubled and groaned loudly. Finally he fell down beside Wessel, and in so doing he made a deep rent in the ground, sheared the side off a giant paper-bark tree, and lay still. 773*

Hours later, when the Morning Star rose in the east, Wessel shuffled back to his island cave, but Kaitjalan could not move, for nausea held him. With the breaking of day the Women turned inside him and tormented him, so that he groaned: 'Why did I eat these Women?' and he vowed a vow to eat only animals in the days to come. Eventually he was seized by a convulsion; he spewed them beside the camp and crawled slowly into the lagoon and rested his head on the stone.

Green tree-ants invaded the hut at sunrise and bit the child till it cried, and this disturbed the Women; but they were so soundly asleep, that they only moved fitfully and returned to their slumber. Kaitjalan saw all this, and his anger was rekindled against the Sisters for the discomfort they had caused him. Their twitching and squirming from the ants so irritated him, that he took his clap-sticks and killed them, and once again swallowed them. But this time he took the precaution of removing their mali, which he fused into three granite rocks near the pool. Kaitjalan now returned to his cavern and went far down into the earth, where he remains to this day.

778● 773*

Kaitjalan's lagoon is well hidden in the bush and supplies a small river that empties into Castlereagh Bay. Men go there for inter-tribal dances or to see for themselves the marks of the struggle in which their beliefs were born. The granite dome by the water is pointed out as the door of Kaitjalan's cavern, and the three boulders beside it are said to harbour the spirits of the Women and child. Concentric channels show where bush snakes wriggled round the hut after the Women during the fatal storm, and a deeply eroded channel

YULENGOR

* 773 [978] is the rent made by Kaitjalan when he collapsed and fell to earth, shearing away the limbs of a great paper-bark tree, which is still scarred and torn, as though struck by lightning.

On calm moonlit nights the faint echoes of the Gunabibee ceremony can be heard from under the waters of the lagoon, and men know then that Kaitjalan and the Women are recalling the past and communing with Wangarr, in the Spirit-land of Buralkor.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Stone Age Religion

It is often asked if aboriginals are religious and if there is 771
an aboriginal religion. That 'man is a religious animal' and that he is 'incurably religious' are theories that have been widely accepted. Nevertheless it is surprising to discover the extent of aboriginal religious beliefs. Their beliefs are primitive, yet they include the early forms of most well-known religions, and cover to an astonishing degree much of the content in fundamental religion. Religion may be defined in many terms, but a score or more of these widely varying definitions cover the indefinite scope of aboriginal beliefs. Aboriginal religion is one of 'beginnings', and the sum total of his beliefs resolves itself into a deep well of proto-religion in which is found fetishism, tabu, magic, awe, fear, totemism, and prayer to departed human spirits.

Fetishism includes the belief that supernatural powers 778●>
may be harnessed by wearing a charm of hair, skin, blood, 765
or bone taken from the body of a dead man.[1] Wandering 776
spirits are feared, the world is full of them and unexplained happenings are attributed to them.[2]

Tabus are carefully observed and ceremonial abstinence 784
is dependent on the fear of definite consequences[3] whilst, because of its negative reaction, Stone Age men refrain from doing certain things for fear of the evil that will come upon [262]
them, as when women abstain from eating men's food and [841]
from hunting their game during menstruation.[4]

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[1] Chapter 5, 'Jungle Lore and Etiquette.'
[2] *ibid.*
[3] Chapter 6, 'From Hand to Mouth.'
[4] Chapter 5, 'Jungle Lore and Etiquette.'